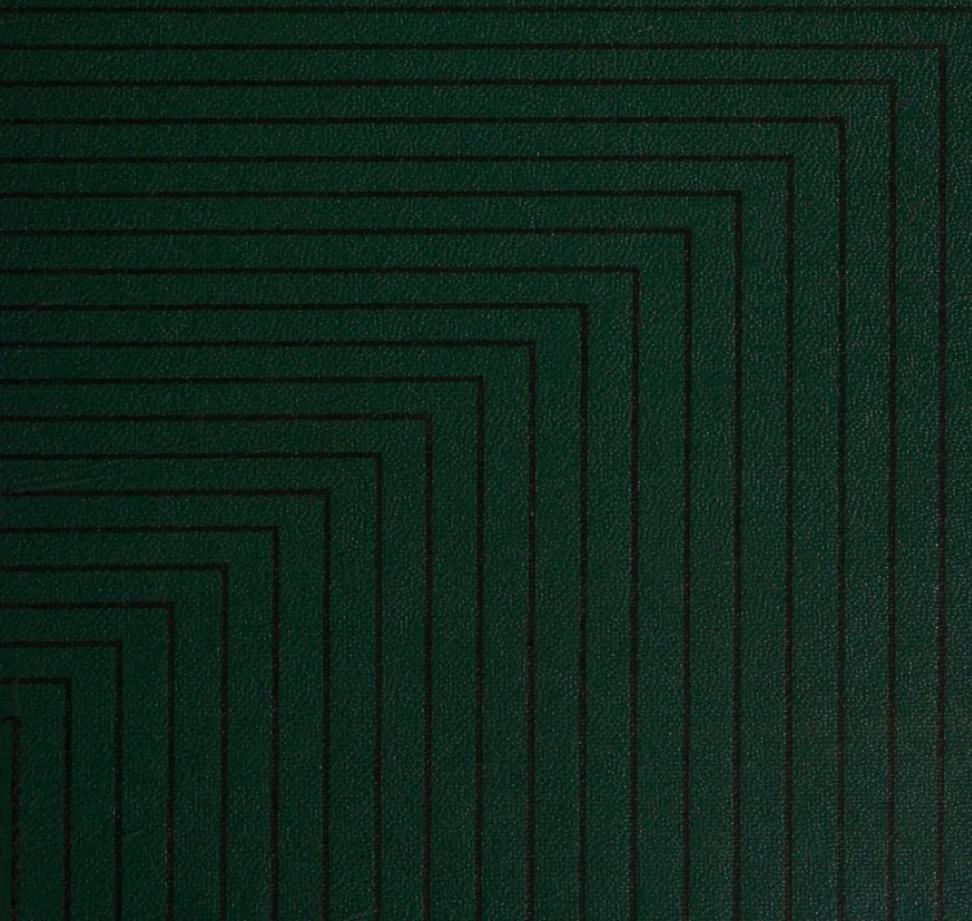


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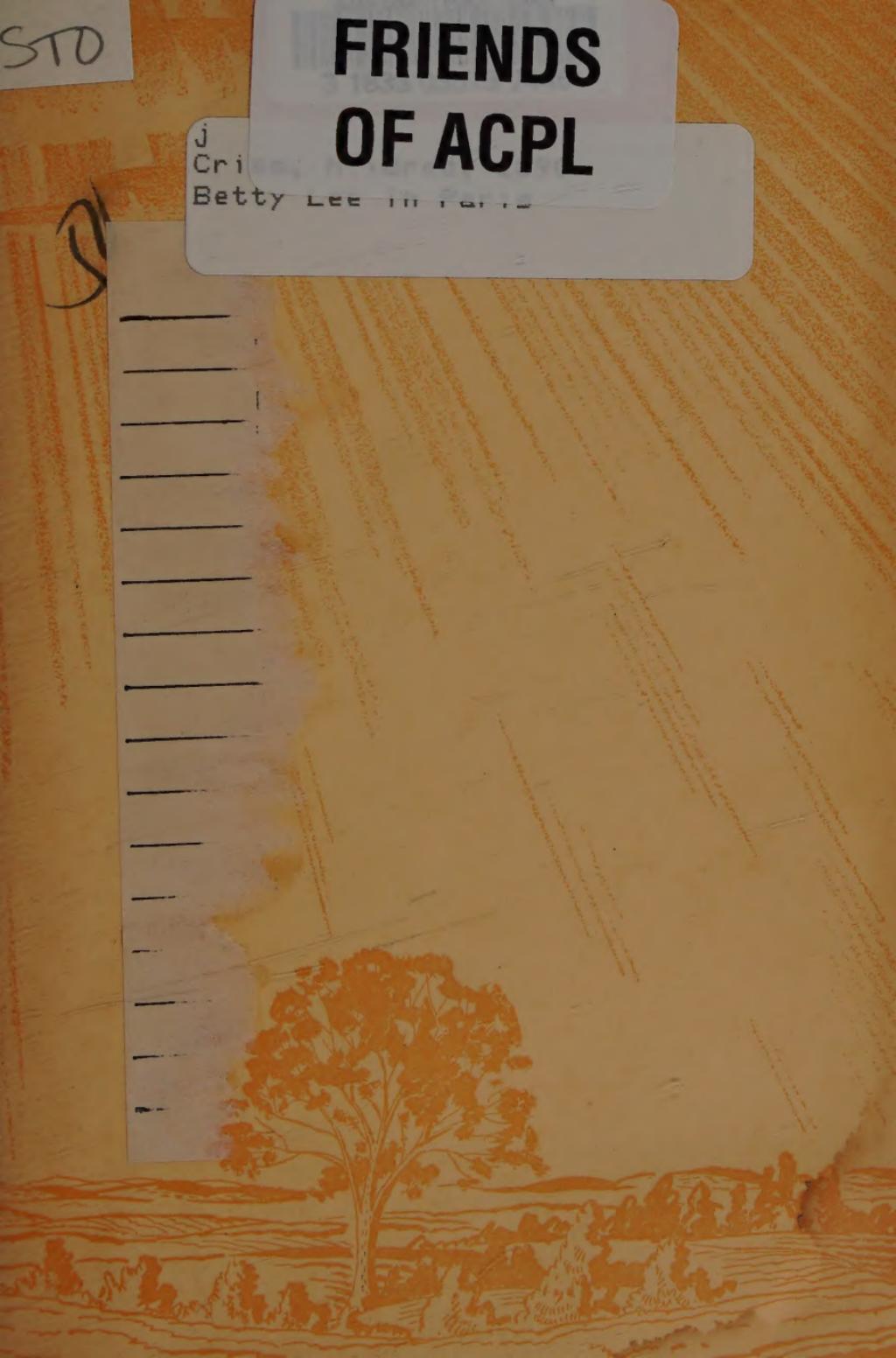
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Betty Lee in Paris





BETTY LEE IN PARIS

BOOKS BY
MILDRED CRISS



BETTY LEE IN PARIS
(formerly "Little Cabbages")

MALOU



Betty Lee sees Paris

YOUNG MODERNS BOOKSHELF

BETTY LEE IN PARIS

BY

MILDRED CRISS

*Formerly "Little Cabbages" by
Mildred Cress McGuckin*



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TO

THOMAS BALL CRISS

WHO UNDERSTOOD AND LOVED THE

FINEST THINGS

IN

LIFE

721508

205302

CONTENTS

<small>CHAPTER</small>	<small>PAGE</small>
I. Wood-Kitties	I
II. Peter's School	14
III. A Lonely Big Black Doll	33
IV. The Ship Comes in	45
V. Peter Goes for Strawberries	64
VI. In the Garden	81
VII. The Prince Who Came in a Basket	93
VIII. Biblio Runs Away	106
IX. Biblio Drowns the Cat Who Fishes	123
X. The Patient Pigeon	137
XI. An Insult	149
XII. Betty Lee Makes a Courtesy to a Countess	165
XIII. Lemoine Has His Way	180
XIV. In the Cellar	194
XV. Through the Woods to Sylvie's House	206

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVI.	The Monocle Man's Treachery	222
XVII.	What a Day It Was	241
XVIII.	Peter Entertains All Sorts of People	254
XIX.	The Accident	267
XX.	The Wrinkle Grows Less Deep	286
XXI.	Biblio Finds Another Beautiful Kingdom	301

ILLUSTRATIONS

Betty Lee Sees Paris	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
Betty Lee's waves stayed little and curled up tight	55	PAGE
It was too beautiful to talk.	87	
Biblio had been wondering if he would see her	III	
Biblio loved these gargoyles of Notre- Dame	125	
"I always think of Notre-Dame with her arms raised."	151	
They leaned over the stone railing of the Quai	187	
Betty Lee and her father arrived with the basket of goodies	211	
The days in Paris were not long enough .	223	
Through the Bois in an old-fashioned victoria	233	
"Of all the lovely bridges in Paris this is the most lovely."	273	

BETTY LEE IN PARIS



CHAPTER I

Wood-Kitties

IF BETTY LEE GRAY had not been a young lady twelve years old, she might have been a columbine or a wild rose. She belonged in a garden where butterflies flutter from flower to flower to be sure that each has its share of affection. She had never heard the words "you must" or "you must not," and she had never been punished. Betty Lee Gray was brought up by hand and loved as much as any little girl could be loved. She did not know what it was to be un-

happy and she found something about everything and everybody to like—even wood-kitties.

The State of Virginia nods and dreams in the month of October. The Alleghany Mountains fall asleep under a canopy of blue haze, and in all the county of Bath there is no more story-book place than the Grays' Meadowlarks.

"The rhymes have got me," sighed Betty Lee, and began to chew the end of her pencil. She was sitting on the stone wall under her favorite pine tree. The wind was too lazy to blow the white clouds from the hilltops. There was no sound except the chatter of Cows' Pasture River, playing with its pebbles, and the humming of the darkies washing their mules in the shallow water. Betty Lee wrote down the lines that were buzzing in her mind. She called them, "The Piccaninny Song." After a little while she said them all aloud to see how they would sound. They went something like this:

O put yo' arms tight round me, Mammy,
De wind am singing low!
De shadows in de corner, Mammy,
What makes 'em shiver so?
O put yo' arms tight round me, Mammy,
An' let me see yo' face,
Den I won't minds de shadows, Mammy,
Round dis here spooky place.

O put yo' arms tight round me, Mammy,
What am dat rattlin'? Hark!
O it's de black man, black man, Mammy,
He's outside in de dark!
O don't yo' let him take me, Mammy!
Jes' yo'-all tell him, "No!"
Cause it's de black man, BLACK MAN, Mammy!
An' I don' wants to go!

The old pine smelled good, toasting in the warm sun. Its shadows made the corner a dreamy spot. Betty Lee would have liked to spend a little more time on her poem, but she was too drowsy. She closed her eyes and leaned back against one of the most comfortable stones in the wall. "I'll listen to the branches of my old friend whispering to the breeze," she told herself, but in less than a minute she fell asleep with the rest of the valley.

She might have dreamed in that warm shady corner until tea time (which means supper time in Virginia) if someone had not killed the mother of ten baby skunks on the grounds of her little friend, Dinwiddie Ingram.

"The wood-kitties, the poor little wood-kitties! Betty Lee! The muvver of the wood-kitties is deaded!" Dinwiddie was only four, and he was running as fast as his short legs could run. It was only a little way from his place to Meadow-larks, but it seemed to him a long journey. He

wanted Betty Lee. So great was his faith in her that he believed she might be able to bring the mother wood-kitty back to life. "Betty Lee! Where are you? I found some poor little wood-kitties!" Dinwiddie's face was bright red and streaked with tears. He had run miles and miles, it seemed to him. Betty Lee was his best, his very best friend. She was almost his fairy godmother. "Betty Lee! BETTY LEE!" He called as loudly as he could.

This woke her, and she sat up on the stone wall. "Here I am, Dinwiddie. Here I am on the stone wall, under the pine tree." She closed her poetry pad, stepped down from the wall, and went to meet her small friend.

"The wood-kitties, the poor little wood-kitties!" Dinwiddie began all over again. "Someone has deaded their muvver."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Betty Lee, feeling as bad as Dinwiddie. "Where are they?"

"In the old stump! They're starving! The poor little wood-kitties is starving. Please, Betty Lee, please come quick!"

No one feels like hurrying in that sleepy time of year in Virginia, not even little people like Dinwiddie. But he managed somehow to keep up with Betty Lee, and presently they came to the

stump where the black-and-white striped babies were squeaking and rooting about in search of their dinner.

Betty Lee forgot that she had on a brand-new dimity dress, one of the prettiest Aunt Jolly had made for her. The plight of the baby skunks put everything else from her mind. She went down on her hands and knees, reached into the hole, and dragged out the creatures. They lay in a squirming mass, crying as any baby that had not had its dinner for several days might cry. "Now, Dinwiddie," said Betty Lee, "what shall we do with them?"

The small boy opened his eyes wide and said gravely, "Feed 'em."

The question was, how? "Let's get a wheelbarrow and take them to Peter. He will help us. He will know what to do." (Peter was Betty Lee's father.)

"They don't smell dood," said Dinwiddie.

"I know. But they won't bother us if we are careful not to frighten them. Poor little fellows. It's not their fault. And Peter won't mind. He will understand. Now, hurry, Dinwiddie. Go ask someone to give you a wheelbarrow while I stay here to take care of the poor hungry kitties."

"Real kitties don't smell," said Dinwiddie,

gazing upon the black-and-white squirming mass. Then he trudged off toward the stable. He came back after half an hour trundling a wheelbarrow as large as himself.

"Fill the wheelbarrow with leaves," Betty Lee told him. "The babies must not be joggled."

When the wheelbarrow was lined with red and brown leaves, Betty Lee lifted the wood-kitties into it and arranged them side by side.

Dinwiddie took up his stand by the wheelbarrow while Betty Lee began to push it toward Meadowlarks.

Peter Gray, Betty Lee's Peter, was a roundish man of medium height. He had frosted hair, and deep-set blue eyes with a twinkle as merry as the twinkle in the eyes of a schoolboy. As a young man he had lived in Europe. France he loved as he loved Virginia. French he knew as well as many Frenchmen. Peter Gray was a "rich" poor man. Meadowlarks was a small place, but it yielded a harvest of good times. Peter Gray's interest in life was his daughter. He thought of little else. He wanted her to understand and love all the things that he loved.

"Some day," he would sigh, "when our ship comes in, we will sail away and go to Paris."

Peter was not in the least annoyed when Betty

Lee and Dinwiddie arrived with a wheelbarrow full of baby skunks. He was watering the rose garden, but when he saw the children coming, he laid down the hose and went to meet them. Catching sight of what was in the wheelbarrow, he burst out laughing.

"But, Peter," objected Betty Lee, "Peter, darling, they're starving."

"Yes," added Dinwiddie. "someone's gone and deaded their muvver."

Peter was not fond of skunks, but he could not bear to think of them starving. "I know what we can do," he said, stroking the back of one wood-kitty that was squeaking louder than the rest, "we can give them to the mother wood-cat who lives behind the stable. She has a brood of her own. No doubt she will not mind adopting a few more." Peter made a face over the word "few."

"Where's the muvver wood-kitty?" Dinwid-die asked, looking up into Peter's face.

Peter took the little fellow's hand. "Come on. We'll go and find her and ask her how she feels about the matter."

Peter fell to thinking about ways and means to place ten baby skunks in a new home without meeting the mother. "I think," he said, "that we had better ask Swan to drive her from her

roosting place so that we may put the newcomers with her own children without meeting the lady herself."

Swan and his wife, Crocus, were the Negro servants. Neither of them, and no one else, for that matter, knew how old they were. Their hair was white and their skin wrinkled like the hide of a hippopotamus. Swan scratched his white head and mumbled, "I's powerful skeered o' skunks, Marsus. 'Deed I is."

Peter coaxed him. Dinwiddie begged him, and Betty Lee showed him the poor hungry little babies and asked him how he could refuse anything so pitiful.

Swan mumbled and grumbled and shuffled off finally in the direction of the stable. After a while he came back, mopping the perspiration from his wrinkled brow, and told them it was safe to come.

Peter pushed the wheelbarrow full of squirming passengers. When they reached the barn he said, "You take five, Betty Lee, and I'll take five, and you stand on guard, Dinwiddie, to warn us if the mother comes back."

Fortunately, the ten orphans were introduced to their new brothers and sisters before Dinwiddie called out, "I smells her coming. I smells the dood muvver wood-kitty. The little wood-kitties

don't smell dood, but the muvver smells *awful!*!"

No one waited to see the mother's surprise. "I wonder what she will do?" Betty Lee asked. "Do you think she will be pleased? Do you think she will be kind to the orphans and make them happy?"

Peter was sure that she would. "But I'll tell you who won't be pleased, and that's Dinwiddie's mother. I do not imagine she cares for wood-kitty perfume."

Dinwiddie looked worried.

Then Aunt Jolly came out and saved the situation. "If you'll come indoors with me, Dinwiddie," she said, "I'll see what warm water and soap can do for you before you go home to your mother."

When she had finished with Dinwiddie there was not much wood-kitty perfume left. "Now, young fellow, walk yourself straight home and tell your mother all about it," said Aunt Jolly, kissing the little boy on his shiny forehead.

Betty Lee's Aunt Jolly was a dear old-fashioned lady. She usually wore gray to match her hair, and her fine linen handkerchiefs smelled of violets. She had devoted her life to taking the place of Betty Lee's mother, who had died long ago. Aunt Jolly was a joyful little person and

went about humming songs that seemed to have no endings. The days at Meadowlarks were not long enough for Aunt Jolly to finish all the work she wished to do. Sometimes she would get up at six to help Crocus with the waffles for Peter's breakfast, and very often she would sew until midnight to finish one of Betty Lee's hand-made frocks. Cool mornings Aunt Jolly would tip-toe into Betty Lee's room and Peter's room to close the window so that it would be "comfy" for them to dress. If either of them felt lazy, Aunt Jolly, not Crocus—Crocus was too old to climb up and down the stairs needlessly—would bring up the breakfast. If either of them lost anything, and they were forever losing things, Aunt Jolly managed in some way to find it for them. Every night for twelve years Betty Lee had gone to sleep listening to Aunt Jolly singing:

Come, Mr. Sandman, as fast as you can,
With your bag of sand in your fat chubby hand;
Sprinkle it far and sprinkle it near,
Sprinkle it into these big blue eyes so dear.

It would have seemed lonely to go to sleep without the little song, although Betty Lee knew, of course, that she was much too old to be sung to sleep. It was Aunt Jolly who determined that Betty Lee should be brought up by hand. If

Aunt Jolly could have made her shoes and stockings and gloves she would have done so gladly. "Hand-made" was the wish in her heart for everything belonging to Betty Lee.

"Baby skunks," Aunt Jolly shook her head. "Go in, darling, and put on one of the other new dimities. I hung three of them in your closet this morning."

Betty Lee looked down at her pretty dress. "I'm sorry, Aunt Jolly, but you can mend it, can't you?" It never occurred to Betty Lee to think that there was anything that Aunt Jolly could not do. "I'm sorry about the wood-kitties, darling, I couldn't help it."

It was an Indian summer evening. The stars blinked through the mist, and the haze in the valley was like a quiet sea, white with moonlight. Lonely owls hooted, elderly frogs croaked, crickets chirped, and lightning bugs flickered in the shadows of the rose garden. "Peter," said Betty Lee, who was sitting beside her father on the porch steps, "I want you to hear my new poem. I wrote it this afternoon before Dinwiddie came. I've called it the 'Piccaninny Song.'" She had come to the line:

O don't yo' let him take me, Mammy,
Jes yo'-all tell him "No,"

when something came bounding up the path from the road.

It was a huge woolly puppy, as large as a small pony and as floppy as a rag doll.

"Peter, look!" exclaimed Betty Lee who was the first to catch sight of this visitor.

Peter could not help looking. The great puppy was prancing up and down, wagging its shaggy tail and panting like an engine.

They looked to see if there was any collar on the dog, but they found none. "You beautiful, beautiful darling," said Betty Lee, and put her arms around his neck. "Haven't you any home? Haven't you anyone to love you?"

The great puppy rubbed himself against Betty Lee and began to lick her hand.

Peter laughed. "Jolly," he called to his sister, who was sewing by the open window in the library, "have you an extra bowl of milk? We have a visitor."

Betty Lee looked quickly at her father, saw the wonderful twinkle in his blue eyes, and knew exactly what he was thinking. "Aunt Jolly, it's not a visitor. It's a new member of the family. Come and see him. He's beautiful."

Aunt Jolly laid down her sewing and stepped to the door. She was wondering what kind of

creature this new "member" might be. Nothing would have surprised her. Nevertheless, when she saw the puppy, she exclaimed, "Mercy on us! You certainly don't intend to keep that. Why, it's as big as a horse."

Betty Lee laughed. "Oh, yes, indeed we do, Aunt Jolly. We love him, don't we, Peter? What shall we call him? What do you think would be a good name?"

"Napoleon," suggested her father. "He's sure to be emperor of all the dogs in the valley."

Aunt Jolly thought Hippo, short for hippopotamus, would be more suitable.

Betty Lee always kept very still when she thought hard. She was still as a mouse now. "He'll be the greatest dog in the valley, that's certain, and he ought to be called Napoleon. He's the biggest and should be named Hippopotamus. Which do you think is the better, Peter?"

Her father puffed his pipe for a few moments and said, "Why not name him both? Why not call him Hippoleon?"

This settled the matter.

CHAPTER II

Peter's School

THE schoolroom was Peter's library. It had faded red wall paper with cabbage designs, and an old-fashioned grate where chunks of soft coal blazed and sputtered on cool mornings.

But it was not cool this morning. The smell of Indian summer bonfires drifted in through the open windows. It was a day full of yawns and heavy eyelids.

Betty Lee was sitting opposite her father at a long table in the center of the room. They had been chatting French for half an hour. It was the easiest of their work together, so he gave it to her first. He would laugh and say it was to warm up the hinges of her mind. It was time for grammar now, and they spent another half hour on some of the combinations of *être* and *avoir* and they nosed a little into the kingdom of the subjunctive. Then, then the time came for arithmetic. ARITHMETIC THE TERRIBLE!

“Do you think,” Peter asked, smiling, “that

the machinery is warmed up enough to solve a problem?"

Betty Lee groaned. Arithmetic on an Indian summer morning, when the world was full of bonfires and crickets and brave butterflies! Arithmetic! Ugh! Figures were so ugly! They did not mean anything. While problems, well, they were altogether senseless! Betty Lee looked at her father out of the corner of her eye and wondered if there was any chance of his changing his mind. It was a wonderful mind. Sometimes it did change where dreadful things like problems were concerned.

Peter knew exactly what she was thinking. He lighted his pipe and began firmly. "Now think very hard. If a man, a dealer, buys 50 yards of silk at \$1.00 a yard and sells it for \$5.00 a yard, what is the selling price for the 50 yards?"

Betty Lee sat very, very still. The answers to all such problems she had tucked away in her imagination between the cabbage designs in the wall paper. She searched now for the answer to this awful problem. They had had it the day before. Betty Lee was sure the answer was there somewhere. She repeated, "If a dealer buys 50 yards of silk at \$1.00 a yard and sells it for \$5.00 a yard—if a man, a dealer, buys 50 yards of silk at

\$1.00 a yard—if a man buys 50 yards of silk at \$1.00 a yard and sells it for \$5.00 a yard—what is the—what is the selling price for the 50 yards?” Betty Lee went over and over this puzzling question, but the \$5.00 and the \$1.00 and the 50 yards and the one yard and the selling price were all confused. The dear old cabbage designs had failed her. She could not find the answer. She began all over again. “If a man, a dealer, buys 50 yards of silk——”

Peter tried to help. “Fifty times five is what?”

Betty Lee could not see that this had anything whatever to do with the question. She was sure, however, that it had, or Peter would not ask her. But she did not understand. After a few minutes, she looked at her father and wondered if there would be any use to wheedle. She decided to try. “Peter, darlingest, don’t you think these problems are very ugly? You don’t really care anything about this old man and his 50 yards of silk, do you? Must we do them?”

Peter was firm. “Tell me the answer to this one and we will do no more this morning.”

Betty Lee began again. “If a man buys 50 yards of silk at—how much did he buy it for, the silly old fellow?”

“One dollar a yard,” said Peter, and he could

not help smiling. "If he sells it for \$5.00 a yard, what was the selling price?"

Betty Lee had no idea. "He sells it for—for—he sells it for—"

Then Peter came to the rescue. He knew that his daughter's mind ran swiftly when it ran in rhyme. He began to hum: "This dealer man was very thrifty. Sold his goods for two hundred and—"

"Fifty!" cried Betty Lee.

History came next. Betty Lee had written a long poem about the ruling houses of France. She and her father had drawn pictures of the "houses" and scribbled the poems inside of them.



JULIUS CÆSAR'S HOUSE
(58 B. C.)

Cæsar took the country Gaul,
Five eight B. C. he took it all.
Geneviève prayed God to spare
Her Paris from the Huns' warfare.



MEROVINGIAN HOUSE

(481 to 752)

Clovis, King of all the Franks,
Saved most of Gaul from Roman pranks.
Later Merovingian Kings
Were just a crowd of "Do-Nothings."



CAROLINGIAN HOUSE

(752 to 987)

So the throne to Pepin fell,
The son of Mayor Charles Martel;
Pepin's son great Charlemagne
Took Germany and part of Spain,
And of Italy a bit.
But his three sons were lacking wit;
Fighting, they split the Empire great
And left it weakened by their hate.



CAPETIAN HOUSE

(987 to 1328)

Norman pirates then we know
Were held in check by Count Odo;
Hugh Capet, his nephew great,
Became the King. Vast was his state!
Aquitania, Normandy,
And Spain and Gaul and Brittany!
Families, friends, and combatants
Were to unite into one France!
Norman William went o'er seas
And conquered England on his knees.
Charles the Fair left ne'er a son
And so a quarrel was begun.



HOUSE OF VALOIS
(1328 to 1589)

King of England, Edward Third,
A hundred years of war bestirred,
"Nephew of the French King Charles,
'Tis I am King of France!" he snarls.
Valois Philip Sixth of France
Declared with vim, "This is my chance!"
Phil was grandson of Phil Three
Capetian King of *bel-esprit*.
Joan of Arc fought in this strife,
And then for faith laid down her life.
Valois' ruling voice was stilled
When Henry Third at Blois was killed.



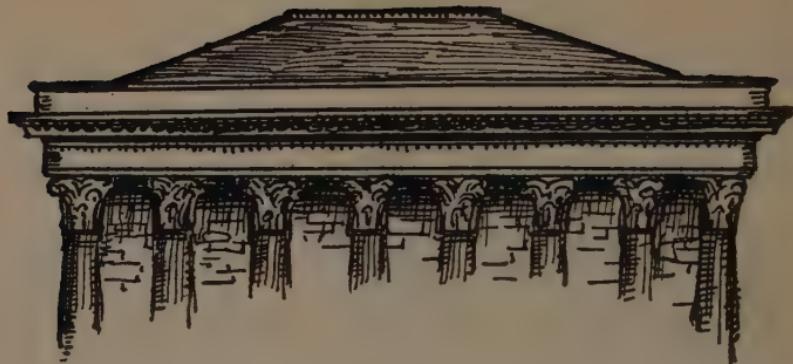
HOUSE OF BOURBON

(1589 to 1793)

Henry Four! Then Louis kings,
Who feasted on most costly things;
Laughing, boasting, while they carved,
The fatted calves. And Paris starved!
Revolution swiftly came
And filled the streets with blood and shame.
Then Napoleon's mighty sword
Became the First Republic's lord.

NOBODY'S HOUSE

(1793 to 1804)



HOUSE OF BONAPARTE
(1804 to 1814)

HOUSE OF OTHER BOURBONS
(1814 to 1830)

All of Europe Nap o'erthrew,
But he, in turn, at Waterloo
Met his destiny, and France
Gave Bourbon kings another chance.
Eighteenth Louis, Charlie Ten,
Brought back the monarchy, and then
Charlie Ten said none should read
Except the books that he agreed.
Revolution swiftly came
And dragged poor Charlie Ten to shame.



HOUSE OF ORLEANS

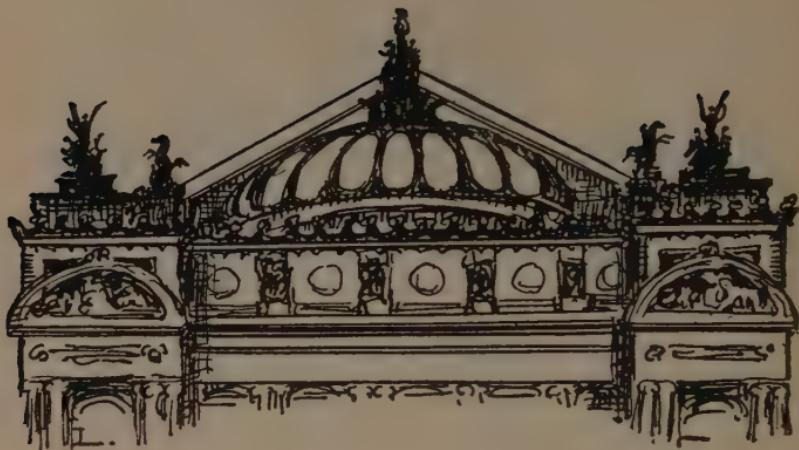
(1830 to 1848)

Paris chose Louis-Philippe
And hoped that he the peace would keep.
Louis built all sorts of things,
And Paris said, "We're done with Kings!"
Revolution flared once more
And showed this Orleans Prince the door.

HOUSE OF ANOTHER BONAPARTE

(1848 to 1870)

Nephew of Napoleon Great,
Napoleon Third, the obstinate,
President became, but he
An emperor would be,
Killing, sending off all those
Opposed to empires, up he rose.



HOUSE OF THE REPUBLIC
(From 1870 to the present day)

War with Prussia made France spend
Her blood and money to the end.
Revolution now set fire
To this the final French Empire.
France, with Freedom's torch aglow,
Became the France to-day we know.

"I think, Peter," Betty Lee said one morning a week later, when they had finished building royal houses, "that some of our verses are out of step. Do you think we could write them all over again and make them better?"

Peter squinted. "They're a little jumpy, I'll admit, but I think we have spent enough time on them."

She was doubtful. "I love doing it, Peter. Let's begin right away and do some more of English history."

Peter threw up his hands. "I have had enough house building for the present, thank you. In fact, I should not care if I never saw another royal house as long as I lived. Let's study geography."

"Very well," said Betty Lee, and went to the cubby where the geography boxes were kept.

They used photographs instead of textbooks, wonderful photographs they were, too! Peter had taken many of them on his travels as a young man. He and Betty Lee had spent rainy days sorting them and putting them into boxes which they labeled with large red letters, Italy, France, Spain, Germany.

"Where do we go to-day?" asked Betty Lee, standing by the door of the box cubby and run-

ning her fingers over the labels of the neatly arranged boxes.

“Where were we when we stopped traveling?”

“In Switzerland,” she said. “We were on our way to Belgium. You said we were going down a great river, through a forest, and into a little country called Lux-something-or-other. Here’s the Swiss box and the Belgian box. Is that right?”

“Yes,” answered her father. “And we shall need the pictures of the little country called Lux-something-or-other. Can you remember its name?”

“Lux—Lux—Lux——” she repeated.

Her father helped her. “Ducks and birds,” he murmured.

“Luxemburg!” cried Betty Lee, and thumped the boxes on the table in front of her father. “I don’t think much of your rhyme, Peter darling!” She gave him a hug.

“Never mind,” he answered. “You understood what I meant.”

Then they selected a strong, well-fed horse and a comfortable little wagon with two bright red wheels, and pretended to travel. First they stood on one of the old bridges in the city of Bâle and watched the slate-colored Rhine swirl against its stone banks in that early part of the hundred

and fifty mile race to the North Sea. Then they made their way to the forest of Ardennes. They came face to face with the robber chieftain, the Wild Boar in Sir Walter Scott's *Quentin Durward*. Betty Lee and Peter laughed at the picture of this Wild Boar. They thought it looked like their great-uncle Payton, whose picture hung over the mantel. (They had agreed secretly for a long time that Great-uncle Payton had a fierce expression.) In the Vosges Mountains, they spent a long while wandering through the old feudal castles, or rather the remains of the castles, and once they went wading in a delightful river. In Luxemburg they went through one or two of the low pink or yellow stone cottages. Betty Lee liked the stories her father told her about the beautiful Grand Duchess who ruled in the Kingdom of Luxemburg. "She is so lovely," said Peter, "that the peasants throughout the land come to kiss the hem of her gown." It was too late to open the Belgian box or to peek at the city of Antwerp.

"Next time," he continued, "we'll spend hours paddling along the muddy Scheldt and we'll try to find out why the Dutch and the Belgians have had so many quarrels. But it's time now for duets."

At the far end of the wondrous old room were two pianos, one left to Peter by his mother, the other given him by his wife. As he could not decide which he loved the more, he kept them both. "Mine," said Betty Lee, "is the squat piano with the stubby legs, and yours, Peter, is the big one with the curve in its back." This hour of duets at the end of the morning was one of the happiest of the day. Betty Lee played the treble parts and Peter strummed the chords of the bass. This morning they played for twenty minutes, then she said, "I'm sorry, Peter, I'll have to stop. The rhymes have got me."

Peter laughed. He was very proud of her writing. He wondered what fairy had dropped the gift of poetry into her make-up. Her mother had been like Aunt Jolly, a beautiful little person who buzzed about the house like a bumblebee. There had been no poetry in her. Peter looked at his daughter making herself comfortable on the window sill and smiled. He was inclined to believe that the valley had poured its romance into her heart.

There she sat, staring out at the bonfire smoke and writing—writing what? He wondered.

He did not disturb her, but occupied himself with the Belgian box of pictures for the next

geography lesson, and after a little while she called to him.

"Listen, Peter, how do you like this?" She began to read:

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The dawn of eighteen hundred
Was creeping over France,
A thousand unseen terrors
Were waiting to advance.
The people's love was weakened
By hunger and by pain,
The King and Queen were playing
And both forgot to reign.
With dreams of food and freedom
The mob pressed on its way,
Aristocrats were murdered
A thousand in a day!
Mere memories of splendor
Reign now in old Versailles,
Pale ghosts of old-time power
Steal through its halls to die.

"Some day when our ship comes in, we'll go to Versailles and let you see the places where the King and Queen were playing when they forgot to reign. We'll live in Paris and walk on the very cobblestones that ran red with royal blood."

Betty Lee was thinking about the Revolution. After a moment or two she asked: "Why didn't the King and Queen and some of the other royal

families feel sorry for the poor people who did not have anything to eat? There would not have been any Revolution, would there, Peter, if everyone had had enough to eat? Why do you suppose the King and Queen and all the others—there were lots of rich people in those days, weren't there?—why didn't they give the poor people some bread? And what about the animals? I suppose all the animals starved."

Betty Lee thought about this a great deal, And that night she astonished Crocus by asking her to leave a little cheese loose on the kitchen table for the mice.

CHAPTER III

A Lonely Big Black Doll

NOVEMBER had thrown aside Indian summer. The valley lay frosted under dull brown colors. Here and there were puddles of ice, and the rattle of carts along the road sounded sharp on the frozen ruts. Something in the air suggested snow. Betty Lee stood by the hearth and watched a fresh piece of soft coal hiss and crackle as it began to burn.

Peter was late, and while she waited for him she looked through a pile of photographs which had not found their way into one of the geography boxes. One picture interested her especially. It was called, "The Dauphin."

"The Dauphin," murmured Betty Lee. She did not know what crown prince it was. It was all so confusing, these princes and crown princes, just sons of kings and then the sons of kings who would be kings when their fathers died. "What dauphin is this?" She was puzzled as she looked at the little boy's face. What a sad face it was!

What a sensitive mouth and long, thin nose! She tried to guess when he had lived from the clothes he was wearing. "Let me see, he has a velvet coat. I suppose it's velvet. And he has a wide white collar and a silk belt. He's carrying a cane—or is it a whip?" Betty Lee was looking to see which it was when Peter came into the schoolroom.

"Darling," she said, "tell me which dauphin this is. I love his beautiful little face. It's so sad. I'm not sure, I think he's a Bourbon."

Peter looked at the picture. "He *is* a Bourbon, Betty Lee. He's the son of the unfortunate Louis Sixteenth. Poor little boy! No one knows what became of him!"

"No one knows what became of him!" Betty Lee repeated. "What do you mean, Peter?"

"He was thrown into the Prison of the Temple with his mother and father. After his father was executed the boy was separated from his mother and left in the prison in charge of some people, shoemakers I think they were, named Simon. They had been made guards of the prison, it seems. Many people believe that they smuggled the Dauphin out of the prison and sold him to some plotters trying to gain power in Paris at that time. Someone—no one knows

who—took the Prince away from the Temple Prison. What happened to him after that, no one can be sure. There have been a million guesses. All that they do know is that the boy who was supposed to be the Dauphin and who died in the prison in 1793 was not the Dauphin at all, but some other child imprisoned there in his place." Peter looked at the picture. "Poor little chap! He didn't know what it was all about. He wasn't more than nine. Poor little fellow."

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"They killed his father and his mother, too, with that awful thing you showed me the picture of, that guillotine. Wasn't that the name of it?"

Peter nodded. "Yes, that was the name of it! Poor Louis the Sixteenth. Poor beautiful Marie Antoinette! I have never been able to bear the thought of their knowing they had to die and leave their children to the mercy of the bloody Paris of that time."

"Did the Dauphin know they were going to kill his mother?" Betty Lee asked.

"I don't know," Peter answered. "They took his mother away from the Temple Prison without letting her see the Dauphin. She had not had news of him for a month before she was beheaded. Perhaps she looked down from the other side of

life and saw what happened to him. She may have known. No one else knew. The world has never known."

"I'd love to meet a prince some day, Peter—do you suppose I shall? I don't mean a real prince, the son of a king, you know, but someone with sad eyes and a wonderful face like the face of the Dauphin. Do you suppose I shall?"

"Some day perhaps you will, darling. I'm sure you will." He smiled and began to warm up the hinges of her mind on *être*. When this was finished they spent the rest of the morning reading French history.

It was Wednesday, and every Wednesday Betty Lee went visiting with Aunt Jolly. Sometimes they went with Swan in the pony cart behind the beautiful, soft-eyed calico pony, and sometimes they went in the Ford.

Betty Lee stood in the center of her cheerful room and looked at the two coats which Aunt Jolly was holding up for her to see. They were both brand new and equally exciting. One was wine-red trimmed with beaver, and the other blue with gray fur collar and cuffs. "Which do you like, Aunt Jolly? Which is your favorite? I'll wear the one you like best."

Aunt Jolly smiled. "Why not wear the red one

on dull cold days and the blue one on sunny days when people do not need gay colors?"

Betty Lee went to the window and pushed aside her yellow rosebud curtains. "I'll wear the red one, Aunt Jolly. It's a sad day."

Aunt Jolly was busy putting a chunk of coal on the fire. "There, darling," she said, rubbing off the black smudges from her fingers, "that will make it toasty for you when we come back."

Betty Lee thanked her, gave her a kiss, and they went downstairs hand in hand.

Swan was at the door holding the spotted, brown-eyed Stonewall Jackson. "Is you-all's globes warm, Little Missy? It's powerful cold dis ebenin', and de pony am mighty frisky."

Betty Lee showed him her snug fur-lined mittens and told him not to worry. Then she helped Aunt Jolly lift the basket of goodies into the cart. The visits to be made were to poor people in the neighborhood—Aunt Jolly's "pitifuls." She never went empty-handed. Betty Lee tucked Aunt Jolly's feet under the lap robe and asked if she could have one of the almond cakes with pink icing.

Swan was uneasy in his mind about the cold and Stonewall's being frisky.

"Don't worry about us, please don't, Swan.

Stonewall won't pull me if I ask him not to. Will you, you spotted old darling?"

The pony sneezed with excitement and pawed the frozen ground.

"He's powerful full o' capers. I's warnin' yo', Little Missy. Old Swan am warnin' yo'! Hold him tight and watch out fo' de ruts and de ice in de road. Dis am treacherous, powerful treacherous weather."

Betty Lee asked Aunt Jolly if she was comfortable and if all the baskets were tucked away safely. Then she told Stonewall Jackson that he might go, but that he would have to go like a gentleman.

The old pony dashed out the drive as if he were a colt. But his wind gave out very soon, and he settled into an elderly jog.

► "We'll go to Aunt Serena's first, darling. I know she has been watching for us since noon."

Aunt Serena was older, if possible, than Crocus, and looked more like a wizened little monkey than a human being. But she was one of the sweetest people in the valley. All her sons and daughters and her twenty-nine grandchildren had gone to the cities. Aunt Serena lived alone now in a cabin no larger than a fair-sized chicken coop. Once upon a time there had been whitewash

on the rough clapboards, but only white splotches remained. Serena's cabin was one of the most forlorn of the many forlorn cabins in the valley.

The old woman was watching for them, just as Aunt Jolly had known she would be. As they came along the high road, they could see her small black face peering out of the window.

As Aunt Serena's hitching post had tumbled over long ago, Betty Lee had to explain to Stonewall Jackson that he must stand without being tied. Then she jumped out and helped Aunt Jolly into the cabin with the basket of almond seed cake and roasted chicken and canned vegetables.

The poor little old woman did exactly as she had been doing every week for the past three years. She fell on her wobbly knees, kissed Aunt Jolly's hand and Betty Lee's hand, and murmured all kinds of blessings upon them. Then she offered them some corn pone and dried persimmons. Betty Lee preferred these crumby bits of corn pone and frosted persimmons to anything she had to eat all week. They had a peculiar taste which seemed to belong to Aunt Serena's hot, stuffy cabin. They stayed only a few minutes, because Stonewall began to whinny and paw the ground. He did not like to stand in that cold wind.

The next visit was to the blacksmith, whose name was Culpepper Jones and who had rheumatism. The old darky's complaint was an annual affair. It arrived the first day of November and lasted until after Easter. Culpepper Jones was a great favorite among the Negroes. His forge was a meeting place for tobacco-chewing and story-telling. Aunt Jolly did not allow Betty Lee to go into the blacksmith's shop, but took her gift of liniment to Culpepper Jones herself. When the darkies saw her open the door and tiptoe her way between the blazing forge and the horses and mules waiting their turns to be shod, they all stood up and took off their hats, even the old ones, who had to pull themselves up with their canes. They all bowed while Aunt Jolly passed.

Then the pony cart was turned toward home. They had not gone far along the road when Aunt Jolly said she heard something crying. Betty Lee heard it, too. So did Stonewall Jackson, who pricked up his ears and turned around the points of his shafts to see what the noise could be.

It was a little black boy, about five or six years old, huddled beside a scrub-oak tree on the frozen bank. He had no coat or hat; his ten black toes were sticking through the ends of his shoes, and

his blouse was ragged and sleeveless. He was hugging himself to keep warm and sobbing pitifully.

At first Aunt Jolly and Betty Lee could not see him because he was just the color of the mud bank and the scrub-oak leaves.

But as they passed him, he jumped up and ran out into the road, crying, "Missus, MISSUS! Please, Missus! I'S LOSTED." Two great tears were rolling down the brown cheeks, and the little boy's pearly white teeth were chattering.

Betty Lee told Stonewall to stop and to stand very still. She helped Aunt Jolly out of the cart and both of them ran to the small black scrap. Betty Lee picked him up in her arms and carried him back to the seat of the pony cart.

"Put all the lap robes around him, dearest," said Aunt Jolly. "I'm afraid he will catch pneumonia." Then she spoke very gently to the little boy. "What is your name, son, and where did you come from?"

"I ain't got no name. I cum from nowhar. I's losted," was the reply.

They could get no more from him. On the drive home, snuggled between them, he shivered less, but he sobbed and sniffled until they reached Meadowlarks. The sobs and sniffles ceased,

however, and a broad grin spread across his face as he saw his supper and began to stuff his small black self on corn pone and batter cakes. This took some time, and then, like a baby raccoon, he rolled himself up in a ball and fell asleep by the corner of the stove, so soundly that he did not know when Swan and Crocus carried him to their cabin and tucked him into the wooden cradle long deserted by their own piccaninnies.

In the morning he had little to say to Swan or Crocus. His small mind was set upon seeing "de white ladies." Swan escorted him, rapped in one of Crocus's red flannel petticoats, to the house, and led him into the dining room where Aunt Jolly and Betty Lee and her father were having breakfast. The moment he saw Betty Lee he broke away from Swan and ran to her and lisped, "Missus, please Missus, I's losted."

Betty Lee pulled him onto her lap and hugged him. "Where do you suppose he came from, Peter? Who is he? I love him. He's just like a big, warm doll."

The little boy snuggled his kinky head on Betty Lee's shoulder and gazed up into her face with wide-open black eyes.

Peter came over to them. "What's that on

his neck, Betty Lee—that little piece of string?” he asked, and patted the small black head.

Betty Lee pulled the string from inside his shirt. Tied to it was a round disk which read, “Number 27” on one side and “Bath County Asylum” on the other.

The piccaninny began to cry while his new friends were looking at the disk.

“Don’t cry, sonny,” said Aunt Jolly, “we won’t hurt you. We want to see where you came from, that’s all.”

“I’s losted,” he sobbed. “Don’t send me ’way. I’s losted.”

Betty Lee made the little fellow sit up straight on her lap. “Look here, young man, did you run away from the orphan asylum? Did you? Are you a naughty little piccaninny?”

The black boy began to cry. “I runded ’way ’cause nobody lubbed me. I’s a dood boy. I’S A DOOD BOY.” He slipped off her lap and huddled at her feet, saying over and over again, “I’s dood. Nobody lubbs me.”

Betty Lee looked at her father. She was searching his eyes for the happy twinkle, and she found it as usual. “Aunt Jolly, Swan, Crocus, everybody!” she said. “I want to keep this little boy. I want to keep him here always. Peter doesn’t

mind, do you, Peter? And Swan, you and Crocus will let him be your piccaninny, won't you?" Then Betty Lee thought of the wonderful story in the Uncle Remus book, and she said laughingly, "'I's mighty little, and I's mighty full o' fleas, but I dun cum.'"

Swan looked at Crocus and Crocus looked at Swan, and they both looked at Aunt Jolly. They liked the idea of their empty cradle being used.

"I have no objection to his staying if you and Swan will take care of him," said Aunt Jolly. "Call up the orphan asylum, Peter, and find out if the child is really an orphan and if they will let us keep him, that is, of course, if you don't mind his staying."

Peter laughed and lighted his pipe. "Mind his staying! Don't you know that I have no sense at all where Betty Lee is concerned? If she wanted a hyena, I should go off somewhere and find one for her."

That settled it. The little boy remained at Meadowlarks, and his name became Diddy Duncum, because that is what Betty Lee sang to him over and over again while she held him in her arms and rocked him to sleep: "Did he dun cum? Did he dun cum? Did he dun cum here to stay?"

CHAPTER IV

The Ship Comes in

THREE cold gray months slipped away quietly, and spring was beginning to whisper when Peter's ship came in. It came from New York in the form of a letter from Cousin Vivian de Witt. She understood Peter's desire to take his daughter to France, and wanted to share her good fortune with them.

Peter and Aunt Jolly and Betty Lee were at the breakfast table when the letter came. Peter read it, tossed it to Aunt Jolly, threw down his napkin, and jumped to his feet. "Betty Lee, Betty Lee! Come here and give me a hug. Our ship's come in. OUR SHIP'S COME IN! Cousin Vivian de Witt in New York has sent us three thousand dollars." Peter was like a child in his excitement.

Betty Lee did not have to be asked twice to hug her father. She flung her arms about his neck. All her life she had been sure that the ship would come some day. Here it was! Here was the wonderful ship come in at last. "What are you going

to do with it, Peter?" Betty Lee whispered softly in her father's ear. She was tickling him with blow kisses.

"Stop that, you monkey. I want to think. I shall have to think long and hard before I can tell you what we are going to do with the wonderful ship."

Aunt Jolly finished the letter and replaced it in the envelope. There was a mixture of expressions in her eyes as she looked at her brother. "I think it's wonderful, wonderful! Vivian's an angel. I suppose you will take Betty Lee to France now, Peter. The ship has come in and you'll sail away." She whisked out a dainty handkerchief smelling, as usual, of violets. But there was just one tiny sniffle, just one. Aunt Jolly looked at Peter again and smiled. "Don't go off too soon, will you, dear? I shall have to do so many things for you both."

He lighted his pipe. Already he had thought a great deal. "Let me see, it's early April, isn't it? We might be able to get off by May 1st."

Betty Lee was so excited by this conversation that she danced around her father. "Are we really going, Peter, really and truly going?—Where are we going, anyway?"

Peter puffed his pipe thoughtfully. "Why don't'

you come with us, Jolly? It's a large ship, you know. Plenty of room for three."

"Oh! Please, Aunt Jolly," Betty Lee coaxed. "It would be twice as wonderful if you came, too. Please."

Aunt Jolly smiled because she was sure they both wanted her. But she shook her head. "You and your father will get far more out of the trip if you go alone. It is better for me to stay here and look after things."

"Whar is yo'-all goin'?" asked Swan.

"We don't know yet, and we won't know until all the thinking has been done," said Betty Lee, and hugged Aunt Jolly violently.

"I'm going to the schoolroom now," said Peter. "I want privacy! Absolute privacy! No tiptoeing in with a duster, Jolly! No washing of windows or trimming of vines, Swan, and poking your black head in the window at me! No rattling about with coal hods, Crocus! And as for you, young lady, I want no snooping, and no wheedling to be told what is going on!" With this Peter swallowed his neglected coffee with one gulp and strode across the room. At the door he turned and looked at Aunt Jolly. "There is so much in this big ship, Jolly, that I feel sure we can arrange to give part of it to you and your pitifuls."

This was so exactly like her brother that it nearly broke Aunt Jolly's heart. She did not know in that moment how she was going to live any length of time without him and without Betty Lee.

Peter stayed in the schoolroom a long while, so long that Betty Lee could not resist the temptation to crouch down by the keyhole and peek in. She saw him sitting at the table, surrounded by maps and pictures, pamphlets and newspapers. She could not see the pictures and maps he was looking at, but she could make out the name of one pamphlet, *Compagnie Générale Transatlantique*, New York-Havre. Her heart gave a little bound. She fell to wondering what it would be like to go away from the valley and leave all the things she loved at Meadowlarks. Then the rhymes got her. Whenever Betty Lee felt anything very much, the rhymes got her and she had to write. She ran for her pad and pencil, squatted down beside the door, and began to write the lines that were jingling in her mind. She called her poem, "To My Front Doorstep."

How oft I've tramped on you, my friend,
How patient you have been!
You've known me bad and gay and sad,
And helped me out and in.

I've often stepped on you too hard,
I've often worn you down,
But won't you try to say good-bye
And miss me when I've gone?

For I must see the world, you know,
And bring you back a prize,
A tale of old, a pot of gold!
A prince with great dark eyes.

So good-bye, dear old squeaky friend.
If I should go to France,
I'll think of you all painted new
In wondrous elegance.

Peter came out of the schoolroom just in time to hear the last two stanzas. He laughed at the line about bringing the pot of gold. "By the time we come home, Betty Lee, there won't be a penny left, let alone a pot of gold. But there will be treasures stored away here." He tapped her forehead. "You will have material tucked away to write a hundred poems. I've decided that we shall go to France and live in Paris. If I can get accommodations, we'll sail from New York on the first of May."

The month of preparation sped. At last the hour came to take the sleeper to New York. One of the last things Betty Lee did, and she was all dressed in her new traveling suit,

too, was to go with Dinwiddie to make sure that the wood-kitties were all well and happy. Fortunately, the family was out walking.

Saying good-bye to Swan and Crocus and Diddy Duncum and Hippoleon and Dinwiddie was tearful. She had a hard time. But saying good-bye to Aunt Jolly was the hardest thing Betty Lee had ever done.

Aunt Jolly played her part and shed no tears—just stood on the station platform and waved them good-bye with her little handkerchief and smiled just as if there were nothing at all aching in her heart.

That night on the sleeper, tucked between the coarse sheets, under the ugly rough brown blankets, behind those two long green curtains buttoned up like some old woman's wrapper, Betty Lee could not go to sleep. She lay there listening to the tum, tum, tumity tum of the wheels and wondered what it would feel like to do everything for herself without Aunt Jolly. This was the first time she had left Aunt Jolly for more than an hour or two. Dear Aunt Jolly! Betty Lee watched the telegraph poles fly by against the gray sky, where the moon and stars seemed to be standing still. Once or twice the tears kept her from seeing clearly. Tum, tum,

tumity tum went the wheels. Now a soft whistle sounded, just as Betty Lee had heard it hundreds of times in the valley. There was something mournful about this whistle, and it made her swallow a lump. She began to say good-bye in her heart to all the valley, the pine trees, the blue haze, the red-brown mud, Cows' Pasture River, Swan's dear old mules, all the darkies singing, all the . . . She fell asleep, saying good-bye.

She woke in the morning when her father unbuttoned the green curtains and kissed her on the end of her nose. "Wake up, lazybones. We'll be in New York in a little while, and it's time for breakfast."

"New York!" thought Betty Lee. "New York! We're almost in New York!" It was difficult for her to believe this, because she was in exactly the same little compartment, behind the same rough green curtains. She poked up the shade and looked out. Oddly enough, the train seemed to have turned around in the night, and she discovered that her feet were going in the direction her head had been going the night before. She could not understand this at all.

What a gray, treeless world it was, this Northern world which seemed to have so many factories with tall black chimneys and sooty

walls. How different it was from her valley, and how fast this train seemed to be going! Last night it had gone with a soft tum, tum, tumity tum sound. Now it was rattling along with sharp little clicking beats. She had finished buttoning the top button of her new shirtwaist. It was her first suit and shirtwaist, by the way, and it made her feel at least two years older than she had done the day before. She tucked her curls under a small tan hat with a bunch of bluets on one side and was ready waiting for her father when he came back for her and told her that they were leaving Newark and would be in New York very soon.

The next few hours flew by so fast that they made Betty Lee feel like a camera taking snapshots. She caught a flashing glance of a thousand new things, among them a great station with tunnels like rabbit holes, crowded streets, hurrying people, a long roofed-in pier and a tremendous boat, a tiny bridge to cross, and, most exciting of all, a deep throaty whistle, an awful whistle that blew for several minutes.

In just a minute after the boat, which seemed to Betty Lee as large as a city, began to move, she found herself up on a top deck with her father.

The air was sparkling and filled with mysterious fishy odors. It was the first time she had seen the ocean, and Betty Lee felt as if she were discovering a new world. She looked at her curls. The salt air had wrapped them up tight. She laughed. "Oh, Peter, I'm so excited, dear, and the rhymes have got me."

Peter laughed, too, and tried to see if he had forgotten how to light his pipe on a windy deck. After using a box of matches, he succeeded, and by this time Betty Lee had finished her verse.

The ocean's just a water world
And very, very blue;
It's full of little waves all curled
Up round and white and new.

"I hope the waves stay little and round and white and curled up," said Peter, as they made their way below. "I've seen them when they were wide open and ragged-edge and dark. It's a sight none too pleasant. I hope you will not have to see them that way."

"I think I should like to see the ocean when it's angry, Peter. It must be very exciting."

"It is, but sometimes it fills your tummy with downsie feelings."

No one thought very much about seasickness during that crossing. Betty Lee's waves stayed

little and curled up tight. Perhaps they liked the compliment of having had a rhyme written about them by a new friend. At any rate, the days were merry with soft winds, blue skies, and sparkling sunshine.

Peter and Betty Lee spent almost all their time on the top deck playing deck tennis and shuffle board. No other little girl on board could catch the quoit so easily, and none was so nimble on her toes as Betty Lee. She played with speed and accuracy. Leaping and twisting in the air and sliding along the slippery boards of the deck, Betty Lee looked more than ever like a butterfly in front of a puff of wind. Many people left their steamer chairs on the gray sunless deck below and came up to see her play. But she never knew they came to watch her. She thought they liked to sit in the warm sun and toast themselves.

There was just one speck, and a rather large speck it was, too, on the horizon to spoil the perfection of Betty Lee's crossing. The speck was a girl named Hester Meggs. Unfortunately, she happened to be the daughter of one of Peter's old friends. Naturally enough, they met the first day out. Betty Lee had never known anyone about whom she could not find something to like, just a little something, perhaps, but some-



*Betty Lee's waves stayed little and curled
up tight*

thing just the same. About Hester Meggs there seemed to be nothing to like. It was not her fault that she had been born with two small eyes set close together and a mouth shaped liked a croquet wicket. Nor could she help her voice. It was just a whining voice, and that's all there was to it. What upset Betty Lee most about Hester Meggs was the mean things she said, not only about people behind their backs, but to their faces, really mean things that hurt.

Betty Lee's best friend on board was the sailor who marked out the tennis courts with chalk and gave the deck games to the passengers who wanted to play. The man's name was Pierre. He let her help him mark the courts. The third day out he told her where he hid the key to the wooden chest filled with the deck games. Betty Lee was delighted to be trusted, and she promised to help Pierre pick up the quoits and nets and shuffle-board sticks whenever the passengers left them lying about the deck. It was rather fun. She felt that she belonged to the ship, and she liked to help Pierre. He had such jolly freckles and such a large, round mouth which he opened in rather the same way that a goldfish opens its mouth.

One day after lunch Betty Lee came to the

boat deck before anyone else. Pierre had put away all the mallets and quoits and shuffle-board sticks and locked them in their box, hiding the key, as usual. Betty Lee wanted the tennis quoit. She did not see Hester Meggs hiding behind one of the lifeboats.

Hester watched her find the key in its secret place, unlock the box, take out the quoit, lock the box again, and return the key. Something very unpleasant must have taken place inside Hester as she watched Betty Lee, and whatever it was, it made her do a contemptible thing. When Betty Lee was not looking, she took the key, opened the box, and threw all the games overboard.

In a little while Pierre came up from his dinner and discovered what had happened. There was no one on deck except Betty Lee. No one but she had any idea, or so Pierre thought, of where that key was kept. When he discovered the games were missing, he asked Betty Lee if she had seen them, and he asked her with a squint in his eye which hurt her feelings very much. When she told him she had taken out only one quoit, he made a grunting noise and shuffled off. He did not say anything more, but he never spoke to Betty Lee again.

It was the only unpleasant thing during the voyage.

The last morning out she said to Peter: "I've loved it all so, dear. I think I would like to thank the Captain and tell him what a good time I have had. Do you think I could, Peter? Do you think he would like to be thanked for bringing us safely all this long way across the ocean?"

"I have a feeling that the Captain would love to be thanked. But you'll have to hurry, because we are getting in toward shore, and that means he will be very busy, too busy to speak to you."

Betty Lee lost no time in skipping down to her stateroom for a pad and pencil. She came back in a few minutes and crawled up beside her father, onto the edge of one of the lifeboats. "I'm going to write him a poem, Peter. Shall I write it in English or in French? Which do you think he would like the best?"

Peter took his pipe out of his mouth and knocked it against the side of the lifeboat. "French people love French things always, Betty Lee. But I bet you can't write a French poem."

She sat very still.

Peter understood how necessary it was for him to keep still, so he refilled his pipe and smoked

in silence until Betty Lee was ready to read him not only her little French poem but a rather free translation into English, also.

*“Pour tous ces diners si bien cuits,
Et pour ces personnes si gentilles,
Je veux vous dire merci, merci !
Pour tous ces vagues si calmes, si bleu,
Je veux vous dire merci, monsieur,
C'est un peu triste de dire adieu.
Vous m'avez porté de la chance,
Vous m'avez donné de romance !
À cause de vous, nous sommes en France !”*

[For all the broth and pie and stew
And all the jolly faces new,
I want to say thank you, thank you!
To quiet waves and sunny sky,
And winds that sing a lullaby
I really hate to say good-bye.
We've had good luck and every chance
To find the ocean's deep romance.
Because of you, we are in France.]

“Do you think I should go down to the lounge and copy it in ink, or do you think the Captain will like it just as well in pencil?”

Peter said the Captain would like it either way, but he asked Betty Lee to make two copies and to send one to Aunt Jolly. “The other,” he said, “I want to keep for myself.”

She scribbled the two copies and ran off down the deck. The question was how to get her poem to the Captain. She could see him pacing up and down the bridge. He looked very serious. She knew it was against the rules to go up onto the bridge, so she sat down on the bottom step of the companionway and tried to think how to deliver her poem. "If he didn't look so serious and wasn't so busy gazing through his spyglasses," she thought, "I'd take a chance and skip up to hand it to him myself." Betty Lee was wondering if she dared try this when a steward came along with a dinner tray. He excused himself, brushed past her, and started up the companionway. Betty Lee caught him by his coat tails. "Who is that for? Is it the Captain's dinner?" She held on to the man until he told her that the tray was for the Captain. Then he asked her please to let him go at once, because the Captain wanted his dinner in a great hurry. "We'll be picking up the pilot any minute," he told Betty Lee.

"Here," she said, and threw her poem onto his tray. "Will you please give that to the Captain and tell him it is from Betty Lee Gray and that she sends him her love."

The steward made a quick bow and scuttled up the companionway.

Betty Lee waited in the hope of catching a glimpse of the Captain, and she was not disappointed. In a few minutes he came bustling down and asked her if she was Betty Lee Gray. He was pulling the ends of his long black whiskers and smiling, not only with his thick red lips, but with his merry dark eyes. "I liked the little poem very much," he said. "So much, that I want to give you a souvenir. Will you come with me to my cabin?" He took her through the short corridor leading to his stateroom, and he gave her a bronze medal with the figure of a woman called "La Belle France" holding out her arms to another figure, a young man called "Les États-Unis." "That," he said, "stands for France and the United States and a friendship between your country and mine. I should like to have you keep it always, and I should like to feel that you will understand and will love France as much as I love the United States." The Captain clicked the heels of his boots together and made a most polite bow.

Betty Lee could not wait to show her medal to Peter. "It has all been wonderful, every minute of it, but this—this is the best of all." She and her father were standing on the boat deck, where there had been so much sunlight and laughter all

during the trip. They felt just a little sad at the thought of leaving it so soon, as they stood there watching the pale green shore line of France coming closer and closer. The pilot's tug was drawing alongside now. It seemed like a toy compared to the tugs in the New York harbor. Betty Lee held her breath while the pilot climbed up the wobbly rope ladder to come on board to direct the ship through the harbor channel. Betty Lee liked the pilot's bright blue coat and his round blue hat with its red pompon.

In about an hour, the engines stopped beating, and the great chain began to rumble as it dropped the anchor. "France!" murmured Peter under his breath. Betty Lee saw that her father's blue eyes were misty. She tucked her arm through his and heard him say, oh, so quietly, "To-night! To-night, Betty Lee, we'll be in Paris."

CHAPTER V

Peter Goes for Strawberries

BETTY LEE and her father sat opposite each other in the second-class compartment. The only difference between the second and the first class seemed to be that the first-class compartments had great broadcloth seats, with lace tidies for head rests, and the second class had red plush seats with no tidies. There were six seats in each compartment, three riding forward and three riding backward. Betty Lee and her father had the two seats by the window. There was much to see.

"Look at that freight car, Peter. Isn't it tiny? Doesn't it sit up straight on its funny little wheels? Look at that sign saying, *40 hommes, 8 chevaux*. There on the side of the car. See? Over there!"

"During the war," Peter explained, "forty soldiers or eight horses traveled in one freight car. The French people have left the signs because they are very fond of everything which

reminds them of what they did during the war."

"Forty soldiers! Eight horses rode in that car!" Betty Lee found it difficult to believe. The freight car was so little, like a toy compared to the ones in the valley at home.

There were two dear little old-fashioned ladies, evidently in France for the first time, occupying the next seats. They were trying to see the freight car with the sign, "40 men, 8 horses."

Betty Lee liked the little ladies. They made her think of Aunt Jolly. "We have both the window seats," she said to them. "Wouldn't you like to change? My father and I could take turns looking out of the window."

The little ladies smiled, and they said they would not take her seat for anything in the world. Then one of them, the fat one, turned to the other and said, "Think of it, my dear. During the war, the French army traveled in those tiny little freight cars!"

"Think of it," said the less stout one and smiled at Betty Lee. "Did you say, dear, 40 soldiers and 8 horses or 40 horses and 8 soldiers?"

Betty Lee laughed. "It was 40 soldiers *or* 8 horses; I don't believe the men could have squeezed in with the horses."

The little ladies were thinking more of Betty

Lee now than of the French soldiers. It was their way never to think very long about one thing. "We used to watch you playing that game, whatever it was, up on the roof of the boat," the stout one said. "My, how your feet did fly! We used to wonder what kept you from falling down."

"There's something in my daughter," said Peter, eager to join the conversation, "that is part butterfly. She has a way of flitting. It was useful in deck tennis, wasn't it, dear?"

She gave her father's hand a squeeze.

"We're going to Paris," the less stout little lady said. "I can hardly wait to get there. I've always longed to shop in Paris. I never dreamed I should. Paris! Just to think we're almost there."

"I know Paris very well," said Peter. "I lived there as a young man. If I can be of any service to you, I hope you will let me have the privilege. My daughter and I shall be staying in an old pension or boarding house, the same one where I used to stay years and years ago, on the Rue de l'Université. That's on the left bank of the river, you know. It's quaint over there, and very convenient to the Latin Quarter."

The little ladies seemed frightened by the mention of the Latin Quarter. They knew noth-

ing at all about it, of course, but they had the idea that it was a wicked place, full of strange artist people, not at all the kind of place suitable for ladies. The less stout one said that she had heard a great deal about the Latin Quarter. "Bohemia, it's called, isn't it? A place full of gypsy people who live part of the time in the gutter and part of the time in the cellar."

Peter knew it would be impossible to explain the beauty of the Quartier or Latin Quarter to these little ladies, who were really nothing more than gray-haired children.

The stout one was afraid her sister had been rude, and she turned to Betty Lee and said, "Your father is very kind. We shall not forget his offer, and if we get into any difficulty in Paris, we shall call upon him. Thank you so much."

This ended the conversation.

"Tell me about the Quartier," Betty Lee said to her father.

"The story of the Latin Quarter is hard to tell, Betty Lee, and to understand it, one has to be there. The Quartier is the soul of Paris. Notre-Dame, on its boat-shaped island, is the heart of the city. Without the warmth of Notre-Dame, that most wonderful of old cathedrals, something beautiful would blow out like a candle. Without

the dreams of the Quartier, the city would forget its beauty. More dreams have been dreamed, I believe, in the Quartier than in any corner of the world. They're such wonderful dreams, Betty Lee—of books that must be written no matter whether the writer starves in the writing, and of painting and sculpture that must be finished whether or not the artist's hands are too cold to hold the brushes or chisels."

"Why are writers and painters and sculptors hungry and cold?"

"Because they are poor, poorer, perhaps, than any other people in the world. But if they're real Bohemians, they think nothing at all about money. All they care for is to create something beautiful. They live for days, sometimes, and forget all about their tummies."

"The Quartier," repeated Betty Lee thoughtfully under her breath, when her father had finished speaking. She knew from the look in his eyes and the tone in his voice that there was something wonderful in store for her to learn about and to love.

"Look at that little town tucked under the brow of the hill, Betty Lee. All the roofs are red, and nothing sticks up except the church steeple."

Betty Lee thought the town very like the toy

villages that Aunt Jolly used to bring her. "How do they manage to keep the ugly things from showing?" she asked.

"I don't know," said Peter. "That is the French people's secret."

"Oh! look! Peter. Do you see that old woman tending the gates? She must be older than Crocus. I didn't know women could do work like that."

"They have to in France. So many men were killed in the war. Didn't you notice that we have a woman conductor?"

"No," she said. "I was too busy listening to the porters." She was looking out the window at the lovely hills. "They're like the ones we used to make ever so long ago, in our sand pile. Remember? And oh, how green they are! They're green the way our front lawn is green after a shower."

"I'm hungry," said Peter. "Let's go to lunch."

Betty Lee had never seen women work like those waitresses in that dining car. Perspiration streamed down their red faces, and they walked so fast that they puffed. There was no chance to ask any questions, such as, "What kind of soup have you?" or "Please, may I have a little of this or a little of that?" The women just dropped whatever they had in front of you. First they

set down two thick plates, and before Betty Lee had time to wonder what the plates were for, something called *hors d'œuvre*—some lemon, a slice of hard-boiled egg, and several bits of tomato—appeared. They tasted as if they had been traveling on that train a long time. With them came fat chunks of bread, very gray bread. Peter explained that white flour was scarce in France, but Betty Lee did not care whether the bread was white or gray, and she did not mind eating it without butter.

Her father was delighted to see her entering into the spirit of the country he loved, and not asking for all the things she was accustomed to at home.

Now the waitress was tumbling Betty Lee's fork and knife onto the tablecloth and whisking away the plate. Soup appeared. Betty Lee did not like to see the soiled knife and fork lying on the tablecloth, so she picked them up and rested them on a bit of bread.

“That's right, dear,” said Peter. “Take care of the implements. We will have to use the same ones all through the meal.”

There was something in that soup which made Betty Lee feel as if she were browsing in green grass. Then came small, round pieces of steak

alone on another plate, except for a bit of watercress. She did not like steak, so she nibbled the cress and waited to see what would come next. It was a round flabby something-or-other, like an omelet, but filled with noodles. Nothing else came with this, whatever it was, and Betty Lee ate it all. "What's the name of it, Peter?"

"*Nouilles*."

"What does that mean?"

"Noodles," said Peter.

There was nothing for dessert except cheese and fruit. The cheese had an old expression, and the apples, Peter said, were *rongées*, or mouse eaten. "I had hoped, Betty Lee, that you would have strawberries for your first lunch in France."

"I think everything was wonderful, especially the *nouilles*. I am going to write Aunt Jolly to-night and ask her to try and make something like it, whatever it was."

They were coming into the town of Pontoise, about twenty miles from Paris. When the train pulled into the station, they saw a pushcart man selling strawberries as big as plums. "Look, Peter. Do you think we could get some?"

He did not wait to answer, not even to take his hat, but excused himself, stepped over the little ladies, pushed open the door of the compartment,

hurried along the corridor, and climbed off the train.

The man with the pushcart had passed to the far end of the platform by this time. Peter asked how long the train would wait, and when he heard the conductor say, "Ten minutes," he sauntered down the platform. The strawberries tucked away safely under his arm, Peter went into the station and bought a Paris paper.

The people there were making considerable noise, and Peter did not hear the conductor blow her trumpet of warning or call out, "*En voiture!*" (All aboard!) The first thing he heard was a whistle. He ran out onto the platform and saw that the train had pulled out of the station and was disappearing down the track! He called at the top of his voice, hoping that someone might hear him on the train. But no one did.

So many things flashed through Peter's mind that he was not sure of any of them. All that he knew was that his heart turned to ice and that he could not breathe easily. Betty Lee was on that train. It would not stop again until it reached Paris. **Betty Lee WOULD ARRIVE IN PARIS ALONE!** He rushed into the station and asked if there was any way of having the train flagged, or of getting a message to his daughter by

telephone. But even his French and his knowledge of difficult railroad terms did not help him then. The men he spoke to were kind, but they shrugged their shoulders and said there was nothing, nothing at all they could do, that he would have to wait and take the next train to Paris. It went, they said, in half an hour.

Peter tore his hair and called himself all the stupid names he knew. There was no one to blame but himself. Had he not lived in France long enough to know that a *rapide* or express train might pull out of a station whenever it liked regardless of when it was supposed to go? Did he not know, had he not always known, that this was a favorite trick of French trains, especially when they were a little behind their schedule?

Peter had passed many long troublesome half hours in his life, but this, this one in the station of Pontoise, while his precious Betty Lee was being swept ahead into Paris alone, was the worst he had ever spent. He paced the platform and chewed the end of his cold pipe. He fussed and fumed and was miserable. He knew that Betty Lee had the address of their pension written down on her poetry pad. He knew that whatever she did would be reasonable. This part of it

did not worry him, but the possibilities of what strangers in the Saint-Lazare station might do to her drove Peter almost frantic. Suddenly he remembered the little ladies in the compartment. This was a consolation. "They will take care of her. She will stay with them. She will be sure to stay with them, but where? Where would they stay? Would they attempt to find the pension, or would they take Betty Lee with them where they were going? Peter's heart sank. If they did this, there would be no way to find her, because he did not have the least idea where the little ladies were planning to stay. Would they ask when the next train came in from Pontoise and wait for him there in the station? Peter prayed that they might do this. Then he thought of Betty Lee, Betty Lee with her clear sparkling eyes and her nimble wits. "Yes," he thought. "That is what she will do. She will wait in the station for me. That is what I should do if I were in her place, and she and I think alike."

When Betty Lee discovered that her father had been left in the station, she did a number of things, all at the same time. She clutched the dear little ladies, climbed up on the seat and pulled the bell rope swinging overhead marked *En cas d'accident!* (In case of accident.) Then

while she waited to see what would happen, she began to cry. She did not know she was crying. She was much too excited. After a moment or two, the train stopped and the conductor woman came bustling through the corridor to see what was wrong. She unlocked the door at the end of the car and stepped down onto the track. Seeing nothing amiss, she blew her brass trumpet and signaled to the engineer to go ahead. She had climbed back into the car when Betty Lee came running out.

“My father! My father is left behind! Please—please, won’t you go back for him, or wait, or do something?”

The conductor was very much excited. She sputtered and told Betty Lee that her father would have to come along as best he could. “There’s nothing I can do about it, nothing at all.”

The tears were streaming down Betty Lee’s cheeks as she watched the fields begin to pass by.

The conductor was still sputtering. “It’s against the rules to pull that rope unless there is an accident. You could be fined or imprisoned.”

“But—but my father was left behind. You don’t seem to understand. My father——”

“That’s no accident,” said the unfeeling

woman. "If that bell rope were pulled every time anyone was left behind, the train would never get anywhere. Don't touch it again," and with this she passed Betty Lee and disappeared into one of the other cars.

Both the little ladies and a number of other people were in the corridor now. Betty Lee was glad that Hester Meggs did not happen to be among them. Everyone was most kind, but everyone had a different idea of what Betty Lee should do. The little ladies said nothing, just put their arms around her, and the stout one offered a small linen handkerchief which smelled of violets, just like Aunt Jolly's.

They were close to Paris now, and everyone was beginning to take his bags and suitcases from the racks over the seats in the compartments. As the excitement grew, Betty Lee felt her heart, or something around her heart, begin to pinch. She held onto the stout little lady and said, "What do you think I should do?"

"You can come with us to our hotel and wait until your father finds you, dear. We should be very glad to have you."

Betty Lee thought hard, and thinking just then was not easy, because of the pinching feeling around her heart, and because the air in the train

seemed full of explosive things. She was frightened. Paris alone! Paris with Peter nowhere near! PARIS! She began to tremble and all the while she thought, never in all her life had she thought so hard, not even over the arithmetic problems when she looked for their answers in the wall paper of the schoolroom at home.

The engine gave an awful shriek! This made Betty Lee tremble more than ever. Suddenly they swept into the long dark shed of the Saint-Lazare station. PARIS! Betty Lee's heart felt as if it were climbing out of her. She could not speak. No one would have been able to hear her if she did.

All of a sudden the train gave a jerk and stopped. Porters in blue smocks and with straps across their shoulders climbed into the train and pushed open the windows of the compartments. Then they began throwing out the bags and suitcases to other porters along the platform. Both the little ladies forgot about Betty Lee now and tried their best to keep these strange men from throwing their bags out of the window. When they saw how useless it was to speak to the men, and that the bags had gone through the window onto the platform, the little ladies lost their heads completely and hurried off the train.

Betty Lee followed because she did not know what else to do. Peter's hat and cane and all their bags had been thrown out of the window, too. She had no idea what had become of them, and there was no use asking anybody, because no one was paying the least attention to anyone else. The little ladies were trying to explain which bags belonged to them. But the porters could not understand English, and the little ladies could not speak French. If Betty Lee had not been there to help, there is no telling what might have happened.

When the question of their luggage was settled, the less stout little lady turned, trembling with excitement, and asked, "What will you do? Oh, my dear, what are you going to do, what *are* you going to do?"

Betty Lee thought a moment, and then she said, and she did not know why she said it either, it just came to her suddenly, "I'm going to wait here in the station until the next train comes in from wherever it was my father was left." She thanked the little ladies for being so kind to her, and she began to tell the porters to help her find her father's hat and cane and all the bags. She wished in that moment of confusion that they had brought far less luggage and that half of

Aunt Jolly's hand-made frocks had been left behind. But, thanks to the fact that she spoke their language, Betty Lee was able to describe her father's hat and cane and their bags so that the porters were able to find them in the heaps and heaps of luggage.

All the while Betty Lee and the men were searching for the things, the little ladies were talking and offering to do what they could to help. "We shall wait with you, my dear, until your father comes," and they added with worried expressions, "if he ever does come."

Betty Lee thanked them. She would have put her arms around them and tried to think they were Aunt Jolly if the crowds had not jostled so and pushed by so rudely with their bags and baskets and what-nots.

"Please take our things down there," Betty Lee told the porters, and pointed to the station. "Put them in a pile near—near—" She did not know what to say.

The men were impatient. "*Allez, allez!*" (Hurry, come along!) they said crossly.

The little ladies were frightened. The men's eyes shone so, and their black whiskers looked so fierce. "I suppose we should go somewhere. Tell him, tell them, my dear, to take us some-

where." The stout little lady was growing red in the face.

Betty Lee pointed to an open space which she saw at the end of the tracks. Everyone seemed to be passing through that space. "Take our bags there," she said, "set them down in a pile in the center of that space."

They were pushed and jostled. The stout little lady had difficulty in keeping up with the porters, and once she was pushed dangerously near an engine wheezing and puffing its hot breath across the platform.

Betty Lee gave the porters something; she was not sure that it was the correct amount, and when they argued with her she had to give them more. Then they grunted and went away muttering discontentedly.

The train from Pontoise was late, but it came at last, and with it Peter, running, breathless, a basket of crushed strawberries under one arm, the other stretched out to Betty Lee.

CHAPTER VI

In the Garden

QUACK! Quack! Quonk! Quonk! Honk!
Honk! Quack! Quonk— Honk— Quack
. . .” Such strange noises the Paris automobiles
made! “They sound like ducks, Peter,” said
Betty Lee.

They selected a taxi driven by an old man with long red whiskers and small black snapping eyes. Round the corner any old way they whirled, zig-zagging from left to right, missing other taxis and wagons and people by an inch or two. It was really exciting, this first taxi ride through Paris! Betty Lee clutched her father’s hand. “Why aren’t all the people killed?” she exclaimed. “We don’t stop! Nobody stops for anything or anyone!”

“There’s a law in France,” Peter told her, “which gives automobiles, everything moving in the streets, the right of way. For instance, if I am knocked down by a taxi driver, the man can sue me for being in his way.”

Betty Lee thought this very odd. "We'll have to be careful, darling, won't we, when we cross the street?"

"They made the law so that people would be careful," said Peter.

"Oh, I understand." And she fell to thinking how funny it would be if the darkies at home drove their mules into people and then tried to arrest them for being in the way. "Peter!" She put her hands over her ears. "All these duck horns make me feel funny. Do you feel that way, too?"

Peter admitted that he did.

Betty Lee looked at everything she could on that drive from the Saint-Lazare station to the little pension on the Rue de l'Université, but she saw nothing. Nothing seemed real, nothing except the quacking taxi horns. "The streets are full of ducks, great noisy ducks," she thought to herself. Presently they drew up in front of the pension. It was a white building with dark green shutters and window boxes filled with flaming geraniums. Betty Lee stepped out of the taxi the way one steps out of something in a dream.

"Here comes Mademoiselle Rabot, the concierge, or combination janitor, clerk, and house-keeper. She was just a girl when I was here before."

Mademoiselle Rabot came toward them smiling. What a plump, red-cheeked person she was! When she discovered that Peter was the Monsieur Gray—the Monsieur Gray from America—who had helped her father and mother, the woman's black eyes filled with tears, and she began talking very fast and saying all sorts of things which Betty Lee could not understand because there was no pause between the words. While Peter paid the taxi man, Mademoiselle Rabot talked and talked and wiped the tears from the corners of her eyes with her black cotton apron. Then she tried to lift the bags and suitcases from the taxi. But an elderly porter, a man who might have been several hundred years old, judging from the wrinkles in his face, came shuffling out the door of the pension and gathered up *all* the luggage.

"It will kill him," Betty Lee whispered to Peter. "Don't let him carry so many. He's older than Swan."

The old fellow was loaded down with the bags, but he was proud of being able to carry them and would not let Peter help him.

Not one thing seemed real in that entrance hall with its four perfectly straight gilt chairs, and its dusty green strip of carpet, nothing at all except the odor. This was different from anything

Betty Lee had ever smelt. It might have been a number of things, but it was not any of them. Betty Lee could not imagine what it was. "The Paris smell," she called it in her own mind, and it was never to be forgotten.

"Jean will bring up the bags," Mademoiselle Rabot was saying. Jean, it appeared, was the name of the hundred-year-old porter. "But I will show you to your rooms myself. I have given you the garden suite. It is across the court, you may remember. It belongs to the owner. But he is in Italy now, so there is no reason why you and your daughter should not have it. Oh! I forgot! Will you fill out the slips?" Mademoiselle Rabot motioned to Peter to come with her to the desk where she handed him two scraps of paper like laundry lists. "I'm sorry to make you fill them out, Monsieur Gray, when you are such an old guest, but it's the law, and they are very strict."

Peter smiled. He knew that law in France means law, and that every citizen makes it his business to see that it is enforced. He wrote his name, his daughter's name, where they had been born, the names of their mothers and fathers, where they had been born, what he and Betty Lee did when they were at home, how long they had been in France, how long they expected to

stay, and where they were going when they left.

While her father was filling out these slips, Betty Lee went into a lovely courtyard—garden it was really—with gay flower beds of tulips and geraniums and lilies of the valley. The flowers had just had a bath, and the place smelled as sweet as Meadowlarks. Betty Lee took a long breath, and then a rhyme, a little rhyme got her.

Oh, I'm glad, I'm glad I came
To smell this smell without a name.

She sat down on a white stone bench to wait for her father, and while she was there, three large black cats came and sat down beside her. Such sleek, fat, contented cats they were! All of them were purring. It sounded like harmonica music. Betty Lee felt at home in that garden with the purring cats.

In a few minutes her father and Mademoiselle Rabot came back, and they went through a door at the other side of the garden, into a narrow corridor, and up a short flight of stairs to their rooms.

They were large and friendly rooms full of color and sunlight, like the ones at Meadowlarks. But they had windows like doors, and smelled of the nameless smell. After all the bags were un-

packed and everything put away, Betty Lee would have curled up on one of the broad window sills and enjoyed sitting there, looking out at the jagged roof lines and all the funny chimney pots, if her father had not suggested taking a walk.

There are certain sunsets in Paris when the city seems to burst into flame; Peter hoped that Betty Lee's first evening would be like this. He led her down the Rue de l'Université to where it becomes the Rue Jacob. Then they turned south on the Rue Bonaparte, past all the fascinating shops filled with rare pictures, old books, and bits of parchment bearing the scribble of monks who lived nine or ten centuries ago. It was not long before they came to a gate of the Luxembourg Garden.

"Why, Peter," exclaimed Betty Lee, "it has the same name that you tried to make rhyme with 'ducks and birds,' only it's spelled in the French way."

They waited at the corner of the Rue Bonaparte and the Rue Vaugirard until the blue slate roofs and the windowpanes lost their flame color and became just blue slate roofs again and ordinary windowpanes. Then they went into the garden.

It was too beautiful to talk. Betty Lee felt as



N.B.

It was too beautiful to talk

if she were being led through an enchanted forest. Shadows were twenty shades of blue and purple, and the afterglow tinted the marble statues, making them seem like live people. There was a concert of singing birds. She wondered what kind they were, but it did not matter. Their song needed no name. The trunks of the great trees lining the long avenues or paths were green as their overhanging canopy of leaves.

All sorts of rhymes were running through her head. "Peter, my darling, let's sit down on these little iron chairs and look at the emerald grass in this square. Did you ever see such color? Smell it! It smells of—I don't know what it smells of, and I don't know the name of the birds. But isn't it all lovely?"

Peter drew up two of the iron chairs and set them under one of the long branches of a great bent sycamore. All the branches of that spotted tree were long and drooping. Several of them touched the ground, making excellent bridges for fat pigeons who wished to cross leisurely from the grass up to their roosting places.

Few people were near, and it seemed as if the spot belonged to Peter and Betty Lee. He lighted his pipe, and she opened her poetry pad. Both of them tilted back their chairs and put their feet

on the low iron railing around the square. Betty Lee scribbled:

Every blossom's had a bath
With rain that smells of roses,
All the pebbles in the path
Have white and shiny noses.
Every corner has a gown
That's soft and warm and pink,
Soon they'll have a diamond crown
Of sharp white stars that blink.

She read it to her father and asked him if he thought it would sound well translated into French.

Peter thought so, of course

Betty Lee began to work hard, so hard that she did not see the boy who passed by on the other side of the green square.

But Peter saw. He was watching out of the corner of his eye. How dark the boy's eyes were, how like the eyes of a hungry deer! "Fine face," Peter thought, "one of the finest I ever saw."

When the boy caught sight of Betty Lee, he stopped and stared. Then he passed by. But he turned back, lingered a minute, and then lay down on the grass. Never for one instant did he take his great dark eyes from her face.

Peter understood. He caught the expression of

reverence in the boy's face. He recognized the drooping shoulders, the sensitive mouth, and the wrinkle in his brow. They were marks of the Quartier. They spoke to Peter of hunger and cold and hard work. They were signs of a real Bohemian. Peter was sure that this boy was an artist and that he gazed at Betty Lee because he thought her beautiful.

Her blue eyes twinkled the way her father's twinkle, while she read the translation of her poem.

“*Toutes les jolies fleurs si gaies
Sont baignées à la pluie,
Tous les petits cailloux frais
Sont blanchis comme—*”

“Peterkin, what is a word to describe a white pebble to rhyme with *pluie*?”

Peterkin thought a minute, laughed and said, “*Nouilles*.”

Betty Lee did not think that *nouilles* rhymed very well but they used it as neither she nor her father could think of another.

“*Sont blanchis comme nouilles.
Bien habillés toutes ces choses
Et jolies comme les joujoux,
Bien adorées toutes les roses,
Les étoiles leurs nounous.*”

"*Nounou* means 'nursemaid', doesn't it, Peter?"

"Yes, *nounou* is all right. But you need another verb in that last line, Betty Lee."

"I know it," she answered. "Help me find one."

They hunted for the verb as they strolled toward the gate, but they found none, so they left the poem as it was.

As they turned into the Rue Jacob from the Rue Bonaparte, her father asked, "Did you see that boy lying in the grass opposite us?"

Betty Lee shook her head.

"I think," said Peter, "that his face was one of the finest I ever saw."

CHAPTER VII

The Prince Who Came in a Basket

IN AN attic studio of a very old lodging house, on the Quai des Grands Augustins, there lived a bookworm, an old man named Pierre Léopard. In English this would be Peter Leopard. He had the name of a wild animal, but there was nothing fierce about this old man. Everyone who knew him spoke of him as Père Léopard—old man Leopard.

Père Léopard's shoulders were bent from leaning over a desk, his eyes were dim and tired and his hands crippled from holding a pen. For more than forty years Père Léopard had been writing the same book, a history of Paris. Many times during those years his fingers had been numb with cold, and many times he had shivered as the wind swept across the river and rose to his drafty attic. The heat in the building came up only to the fourth floor. Often Père Léopard had gone all day with nothing to eat but coffee that he heated for himself on a broken coal stove. His

clothing was threadbare and his eyebrows were shaggy. But his mind was one of the finest in Paris. Père Léopard's books were his best friends. He loved them and called them, *mes petits choux* (my little cabbages, which is a Frenchman's way of saying, my little darlings). The old man lived as the real bookworms live, between the pages of his books. Bookworms, the real creatures, nibble their way slowly from page to page only to die at length from pulp colic. But they perish if they are taken from their books. Père Léopard would have died if he had been taken from his or prevented from finishing the great history he was writing.

It never occurred to Père Léopard to think of himself as a poor man except when Lemoine, the owner of the lodging house, came to collect the rent. These were moments when Père Léopard regretted his empty pockets. The rest of the time he looked upon the treasures stored away in his mind as wealth, and he considered himself a fortunate man.

One bitter night about fourteen years ago Père Léopard pushed back his writing and rubbed his stiff fingers. He had worked all day with nothing to eat. He knew that he had to go out for food. He looked at the snow sifting

through the window. He listened to the wind and shivered. He was tempted to go hungry rather than fight his way through the storm to the corner. But he wound a scarf around his neck and shoulders and stepped into the dark hallway.

A gust of cold air rushed into his face. So intent was he on this that he did not look where he was stepping and stumbled over a basket.

For an instant he thought that someone, one of his friends, had left him a present, the remains of his own supper, perhaps, or a *pâté* and a little fresh coffee. Such happy surprises did come once in a long while. But as Père Léopard touched the handle, a pitiful wail rose from the basket.

The old bookworm began to tremble. He knew nothing whatever about babies, but he was sure there was one in that basket. What must he do? In all his life he had never touched a baby. What could he do? There was nothing for him to do except lift the basket as carefully as he could, carry it back into his attic, and take the small scrap of humanity in his arms.

This is what he did, and in that one moment the lonely old bookworm turned into a bookworm with a companion.

Not knowing what to call "his" baby, and loving his books more than anything in the

world, Père Léopard named the little boy for the Greek word *biblion*, meaning book. He called him Biblio.

The concierge, Madame Goose, helped Père Léopard. In her slovenly way she mothered the baby while the old bookworm molded him into the sensitive, beauty-loving boy who had lain in the grass of the garden and gazed at Betty Lee.

Père Léopard had taught him in the attic. Biblio had not gone to one of the usual primary schools. He had studied at home with the bookworm. Thanks to the old man, Biblio had been able to pass the necessary examinations given by the French government to all children not attending schools. Before he was fourteen he had gained the State Certificate, which meant that he could stop studying lesson books and devote his time to art. This had been rather disappointing to Père Léopard. He had hoped Biblio would become a serious student. But it had not taken long to see that the little boy was restless and unhappy without a bit of charcoal in his fingers, and that his dreams were of beauty.

Biblio scarcely stirred while he lay in the grass. He made no sketch of Betty Lee as she sat there nibbling the end of her pencil and murmuring poetry. But the blue of her eyes, the gold in her

curls, and her smile which came and went like the shadows on the grass turned into a picture never to fade from his mind. In all his fourteen years, he had never thought any little girl beautiful. He had scarcely noticed them. If he had thought of them at all, it had been only as a background for the things he liked in the Quartier. Sometimes he had looked at the color of their frocks, but he had never noticed the color of their eyes.

But this little girl, this little American who spoke French as easily as a French child, and who seemed to be able to write French poetry, too, this was no ordinary girl. He thought as he looked at her that she might have dropped from the treetops. "She's like the fairies who dance in the garden at night, after the guard has locked out the mortals," he thought.

The birds stopped singing and the colors faded from the sky when she and her father went away. At any rate, so it seemed to Biblio. He did not stir from the grass as he watched them go. Something in his heart made him long to follow, but something stronger than this held him back. If he never saw her again, he did not want to follow her like a common sneak.

Biblio had no idea who his father or who his

mother had been. He knew nothing of where he had been born. But he was no street urchin. He was no *gamin*. He was an aristocrat in a world of art. He was nobody, but he was somebody into whom God had poured love for beauty. His clothes were bought second hand, sometimes third hand, from the pushcart man in the Rue du Temple. But he was charming and he was serious. He did not know what it was to waste time. He seldom played, but worked because he loved to work. He was an artist, a real Bohemian.

After Betty Lee had gone, Biblio left the garden and went down the Rue Bonaparte. But he did not turn his head to left or right. He saw nothing of the etchings and copies of great masters in the art shop windows. For once in his life, he was not thinking of these things.

He had not eaten since breakfast and then only a *petit pain*. That's the French name for roll. He was to have made a charcoal sketch and sold it for enough to pay for his dinner. He had promised Père Léopard, his old, beloved companion and room mate, that he would not come home without a franc. Now he was coming home with nothing except the thought of the little girl in the garden. This was enough for him. He

would have gone to bed gladly on an empty stomach, but he could not let Père Léopard starve. He had promised to bring the old man a franc. How?

He reached the busy place Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Crowds were hovering about the newspaper kiosques (round stands plastered with advertisements and posters of theatres and railway companies). Working girls, the French call them midinettes, fluttered along the sidewalks. Their eyes were tired and their faces white, but they smiled because another long day was over and they were nearer to the joyous Sunday when they would be free to walk with their sweethearts through the long sweet grass in the Bois, and picnic on meat *pâtés* and red wine. (Most French people, even children, put a little wine in all the water they drink.)

Theatrical looking policemen, or *agents de police*, were moving their clubs about wildly and trying to control traffic. Bent old women with black shawls crept into the church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Gamins, ragged street urchins, with sparkling black eyes and dirty faces, darted here and there under people's elbows. Tired women in the flower markets bent over their faded blos-

soms and prepared to carry their baskets home. Biblio felt all this but saw none of it. He did see, however, he could not help seeing, the old man coming toward him who looked like a walking shop, so completely was he covered with the wares he tried to sell.

The old fellow bumped into Biblio, and they both laughed. Biblio had always thought these “walking shops” amusing. Many times he had tried to count the different things they carried. To-night the one thing which he noticed among all the sponges and whisk brooms and tin pails and dustpans and other junk was a sketch, a badly drawn charcoal sketch of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.

He stopped the walking shop and asked, “How much is the sketch of the church?”

The price was about a quarter of a cent of our American money.

Biblio fumbled in his pocket. He found just that amount, gave it to the walking shop, and hurried across the square.

It was too dark to see now, so he pushed open the worn red leather doors of the church and stepped inside. It was dark here, too, very dark, except where the vigil lights were burning in front of the Blessed Virgin’s Altar.

He went there and crouched down, drew out a bit of charcoal, and changed the poorly drawn outlines of the picture he had bought for a quarter of a cent. It took but a moment. He made a line here, a stroke there, a smudge of charcoal this way, a blur the other, until he had changed the poor sketch into one which would have made you stop to look at it. He cocked his head on one side and examined his work, or rather the work of some poor fellow who knew almost nothing. By the flickering vigil light, Biblio thought "his" work, "their" work, whosesoever work it was, rather interesting. He crossed himself, whispered a hurried prayer to the Blessed Virgin, and ran out of the church.

"Now," he thought, "I'll find my old friend Tolbiac and ask him to buy the sketch." He threaded his way across the busy square and through the tangled narrow streets until he came to the *Café Voltaire*. It was one of the many coffee houses or little restaurants of the Quartier where her students meet at midday to sit and chat an hour or so, or spend the evening over a book, a game of checkers, a little red wine and much black coffee, or *café*, which has given its name to this kind of restaurant. There is something about the *cafés* in the Quartier which

makes them like clubs. Each has its regular guests. To the *Café Voltaire* came elderly lawyers, poor but contented doctors, and many an old writer who had struggled for half a century but seldom seen his work in print.

It was too early for many to be dining. Biblio scanned the tables eagerly in the hope of seeing his friend Tolbiac seated at a table with some of his guests. But he did not see him, and was about to cross the room to go and search the kitchen when he saw something which made his heart stand still.

There at a table in a corner was the little girl from the treetops. She was with her father, and both of them were looking at him. Both of them were smiling, and the father was beckoning him to come to them.

Biblio's knees bumped together as he went forward.

"What is it you have, my young friend? Is it a picture? Did you do it?"

Biblio felt as if his feet were frozen to Tolbiac's dirty floor. He was ashamed. The picture was a fraud. He could not show work like this to the little girl and her father. He could not. Hot things began to thump in his forehead. But he made himself go to them. He went and stood beside

their table and looked, because he could not help looking, at the little girl with her lovely blue eyes.

Betty Lee was looking at him, too. She had never seen anyone like him before, and he did not seem real. Nothing in Paris seemed real. She remembered the Dauphin. Oddly enough, this boy, this rather shabby boy with great dark eyes and very white face, reminded her of that photograph. "Perhaps he is a prince," she thought, "the kind of prince I've wanted to meet." Then a rhyme almost got her, but she did not let it, because she wanted to speak to this boy. She asked him to show her his picture.

But he did not show it to her nor answer her, just turned away his face.

"You are an artist, aren't you?" Peter asked, trying to make him feel at ease.

"I am trying to be, Monsieur. Some day I hope to be, but now I make charcoal sketches to sell in the cafés. That's all." He was beginning to feel now that they might understand what he had done to the sketch. He felt sure they were kind-hearted people. Then he told them about Père Léopard, and the great history of Paris, and about their beautiful home together and all the good times they had.

To Betty Lee it sounded as if he lived in a palace with every comfort and luxury. She looked, being very careful, of course, not to let him see, at his very old shirt. But she did not wonder long, because, as they talked together, she understood that his riches were colors, shadows, and sunshine, and that the beautiful things he spoke about were beautiful because of his way of looking at them. Betty Lee, who found something about everyone and everything to like, found many things about this dark-eyed boy to like very much, especially his eyes and the way he smiled at her father, and, most of all, the tired wrinkle in his brow.

The waiter arrived now with a steaming bowl of soup.

“Bring a third plate. We are three,” said Peter.

“You want some *potage*, don’t you?” said Betty Lee, hoping that a little soup—it was the same that had made her feel as if she were browsing in green grass—would bring some color into his white face.

But Biblio rose and shook his head. He was still clutching the cheat picture. “Thank you, Monsieur; thank you, Mademoiselle. I am not hungry. My friend Père Léopard and I shall have

dinner together later. He expects me, you see. Thank you very much," and with a stiff bow he turned and hurried out of the café. So excited was he that he did not see his friend Tolbiac, who was standing in, or rather filling up, the doorway, with his round figure.

CHAPTER VIII

Biblio Runs Away

WHEN Betty Lee woke the next morning, the three black cats were sitting on her window sill. They were most gracious in their manner. Undoubtedly they wanted to make her feel that she was welcome. Then, too, perhaps they had an idea that she might give them some of the *petit déjeuner* or breakfast. They were wise cats and knew that hot milk was part of a guest's breakfast, and they were careful creatures. They had studied Betty Lee the night before and decided it would be safe to arrive on her window sill shortly after dawn. How they reached the window sill was their secret, and a Paris cat's secret is not easily guessed.

"Peter," Betty Lee called the first moment she opened her eyes, "have you any black cats on your window sill?"

"No," he called back, "I have a flock of pigeons. They have eaten more than half my *petit pain*. I'm annoyed with them because the roll

was small enough in the beginning. I shall be starved before noon." He chuckled. "You're lucky to have cats. They don't eat *petit pain*."

The maid, Marie, was bringing Betty Lee's tray. It was rather a large tray, she thought, for such a small breakfast, but she thanked the maid and bit into her *petit pain*. It was as hard as a rock. "Peter," she called out again, "was your roll tough? And is it all we get for breakfast?"

"Very tough," he answered. "And I am afraid it is all we get. Later we can buy sweet crackers, or biscuits, and hot chocolate in some bakery. Then at twelve we shall have lunch."

The cats had climbed off the window sill and lined themselves up solemnly beside Betty Lee's bed. She could not resist their pleading expression and poured out all the hot milk which she was supposed to have for her own coffee. There was not enough to go around, so Betty Lee added a little coffee. But the cats did not seem to mind. They were French cats, you see, and they liked coffee.

"Fifteen minutes to dress, dearest," her father called. "We're going out to see something."

"What?" asked Betty Lee, and shook her finger at the cats, trying to make them understand

that the milk was all gone. "What are we going to see, Peter?"

"That's tellings. Hurry up and dress."

Betty Lee was ready in less than fifteen minutes, but she said she wanted to write a letter to Aunt Jolly.

"We'll go to the garden and you can write it there," her father suggested.

They stopped on the way at a paper store on the Rue du Bac and bought writing paper—blue it was, and very slippery. Betty Lee liked it because she knew that her fountain pen would skim across it without stubbing its toe. They strolled to the Luxemburg Garden, found the same chairs they had used the night before, and sat down under the bent sycamore. The pigeons were strutting about, cooing pleasantly and looking for their breakfast in the wet grass.

DEAREST OF DEARS [wrote Betty Lee]:

Peter and I are under a freckled sycamore. It's changing its skin, you know, and it's full of white spots. Pigeons! Aunt Jolly, you never saw so many! They're crowding all around us. I forgot to tell you that we are in the Luxemburg Garden. It might just as well belong to us because nobody else is anywhere near. We are sitting on straight iron chairs. We rent them. What do you think they cost? Just three quarters of one cent. And we can sit on them as long as we like. A red-faced woman with a black cotton apron pulled

tight around her middle gave us two pink tickets when we paid her for the chairs. She has no teeth, this woman, no teeth at all. I think you'd call her a "pitiful." And there's a man, perhaps he's a pitiful, too, 'cause he's awfully old, older than Swan I think. (There are lots of old people over here.) Well—this old man is wearing a pale blue coatee with a wide leather belt, like the kind Dinwiddie wears. He's sweeping the paths with a witch's broom. You'd like him 'cause he's sweeping. I can't see his face. It's hidden under a straw hat. The hat's like Dinwiddie's, too. Nice old man.

I love this garden. There is something happy about it and there's something sad about it, too. Peter says a great many people have laughed here, and that there has been much bloodshed. I don't know who laughed, but I suppose the bloodshed was during the Revolution here about seven years after our American Revolution.

Peter's chuckling now and making funny faces, so I must stop to see what's the matter with him.

There were three black cats in my room this morning. Tell Hippoleon.

Ever and ever,

BETTY LEE.

Peter was chuckling because what he had hoped would happen, had happened. The boy with the wrinkle in his brow had come. "I think, Betty Lee dear," Peter whispered, "that our friend of last night has come back."

Betty Lee looked up and saw him coming along the white pebbled path. She was very sure this morning that he was real and she was sure.

too, that he was like the Prince she had known she would meet sometime. "May I ask him to come and sit with us, Peter?"

"That's what I hoped you would do," he answered. "He's the something I told you we were going to see. I knew he'd be here—at any rate, I hoped so."

"He looks so thin and hungry," whispered Betty Lee. Then she waved her hand and called out, "Won't you come over here and sit down with us?"

Biblio had been in the garden since the gates were opened. Several times he had come to the little green corner and listened to the noisy sparrows and coaxed one or two of the pigeons to sit on his shoulder, and he had made a charcoal sketch of the bent sycamore. He had felt before he began it that it was going to be his best sketch. To him it was an enchanted corner, the spot where he had found the little girl from the tree-tops.

From the first moment of that gold morning creeping over the far eastern end of the city, Biblio had been awake and wondering if he would see her. He had made the fire in the most tumble-down of all tumble-down stoves, cooked Père Léopard's coffee, swallowed a mouthful or two,



Biblio had been wondering if he would see her

and then hurried to the gates of the garden to wait until the sleepy guard was ready to open them. Biblio had intended to wait all day. He had not dreamed that the little girl and her father would come so early. He had not dared to hope that they would come at all.

But they had come. Here they were in the same two chairs under the bent tree in the enchanted corner. Here they were, smiling at him and asking him to come over and sit down with them. Biblio began to tremble. He pulled his *béret* (Tolbiac had given him the hat New Year's) over his forehead, to one side he pulled it, and he gave his worn-out bow tie a fierce tug. Then he went to Betty Lee and her father. "Good-morning," he said, and bowed; then, because he did not know what else to say, he said it again and sat down at the edge of the grass at their feet. He wished he could think of something to say. But there did not seem to be anything, so he drew his knees under him and hugged them. The little girl's father was talking about the color of the grass. He was calling it emerald. Biblio looked up and asked, "Are you a painter?"

"I'm only a jack of all trades," Peter told him. "I do nothing myself. But I love all the beautiful things other people create in places like Paris."

When Biblio smiled Betty Lee noticed that his eyes seemed less dark and that the wrinkle in his brow was not so deep. "What's your name? Mine's Betty Lee Gray."

"Betteelée," repeated Biblio, making her name sound altogether French.

Betty Lee smiled at him. "This is my father, Peter Gray," she said. "But you must call him Peter. He would not know what to do if anyone called him Mr. Gray—that is, anyone he likes. Tell us your name."

"My name is Biblio. My old friend, Père Léopard, named me for his books. I have no other name. I am not Père Léopard's son, and I do not know who my mother and father were. I have no name but Biblio."

"I think Biblio is a lovely name," said Betty Lee.

Peter took his pipe out of his mouth. "When you are a great artist, young fellow, you will have to sign your work with something besides Biblio, won't you? What will it be?"

"When I am a great artist, so that Père Léopard can be proud of me, perhaps I shall use his name."

"Biblio Léopard," said Betty Lee. "That would look very well in the corner of a picture."

He did not seem so pale when he smiled, and it made Betty Lee happy to notice this, but she could not help thinking that his eyes would not seem so dark and that there would be no wrinkle in his brow if he were not cold and hungry lots of times. She wondered if he had had any breakfast. "Peter, didn't you say we could have biscuits and hot chocolate? Couldn't we have it now? I'm awfully hungry."

Peter understood, and to Biblio he said, "Do you know where there is a *boulangerie* (bakery) not too far away? This young lady seems to be hungry."

Biblio jumped up. "Oh! Yes, Monsieur! I know a wonderful bakery. It belongs to a friend of mine. Her name is Madame Trèfle, and her biscuits are the best in the Quartier. At least, I think so."

They made their way across the garden, and Biblio introduced two other friends of his. One was a sailboat man who rented toy boats to children to sail in the pond in front of the palace. "That palace was built for Marie de' Medici, the wife of Henry the Fourth."

Betty Lee interrupted Biblio. "*Henry the Fourth!* I know all about him. We put him into the house of Bourbon, didn't we, Peter?"

Her father nodded. Then they both told Biblio all about the history chart that they had made. It was rather difficult to explain all this in French, but they managed somehow. By this time they had come to another of Biblio's friends. The woman had an awfully funny face, and she wore her hair screwed up in a tight knot on the top of her head. She ran the Guignol, or Punch and Judy show, and she invited Betty Lee to come back some afternoon when the little outdoor theatre was open. Biblio and Betty Lee compared notes about Punch and Judy shows all the way to Madame Trèfle's bakery. It seemed that French Punch and Judy shows ended well, while American ones ended with poor Judy being hurled to death.

Peter listened to the children talking as if they had known each other all their lives. He had hoped that Betty Lee would find a companion like this, but he had not dreamed that it would be anyone so charming as Biblio.

Madame Trèfle would not take any money for the biscuits and the hot chocolate. She said that Biblio's friends were welcome, and she told them she hoped they would come again. When they left the bakery Betty Lee burst out laughing. There had been almost no room for the chairs

and the tables, but right in the center of the only space was a group of cats, black, gray, white, brown, yellow cats. Betty Lee hoped that Biblio would not think her rude, but she had to tell him how funny she thought it was to have all those cats in such a small space. Then she told him about the cats and pigeons on the window sills of the pension and how the cats seemed to come and go as if they had wings.

“Nothing,” he told her, “is so wise as a Quartier cat. He knows all about people. One sniff is enough, and if he thinks a person is mean, the Quartier cat will starve before he begs from that person.” All the while Biblio talked of sailboats and Punch and Judy shows and Quartier cats, he was holding the sketch he had done of the enchanted corner of the garden. He wanted to show it to Betty Lee and her father, and he wanted to tell them, too, that it was his best sketch and that the thought of Betty Lee had made him do it. But there were no words stored away anywhere in him to express these things, so he just held the sketch to his side and kept on talking about other things.

Betty Lee wanted to know what it was that he held so tight. She knew, of course, that it was a sketch, and she wanted him to show it to her.

But she did not like to ask him because she remembered how embarrassed he had been in the Café Voltaire the night before.

They had come to the Boul' Mich' which is the pet name for the Boulevard Saint-Michel, the very backbone of the Quartier. They had not gone far before a disagreeable looking man, with a long black moustache and fiery black eyes, stopped them and shook his fist in Biblio's face. It was Lemoine, the owner of their lodging house, and, as usual, it was a very much annoyed owner. The rent, fifty francs a week, had not been paid for two weeks. The man with his sharp black whiskers had been to call on Père Léopard and been unable to get in. "He may be dead. I hope he is dead!" the angry man said. "If he is dead, I stand more chance of getting my money, and you, you *coquin* 'rascal' what have you to say? Do you not live with this old frump? Cannot you do something about getting this hundred francs? Or are you just good for nothing? Unless you pay me by to-morrow, I'll throw you out, both of you. I'm tired of keeping you under my roof for nothing. *Tired of it!*"

Peter and Betty Lee stepped to one side, but they could not help hearing. The man was talking at the top of his voice and growing more and

more excited. Betty Lee wanted to help Biblio. It made her furious to have these things said to him. But Peter told her not to say anything. "Just keep still, dear. It would hurt his feelings if you offered to help. Probably the only thing he minds about it all is that we are here. The best thing to do is to pretend that we do not know what is going on."

Biblio was trying to answer the man in a quiet voice, but it had little effect.

"To-morrow," thundered the owner, still shaking his fist at Biblio. "You pay to-morrow," stormed the owner, "or you go out to sleep under the bridges with the rest of the city rats!"

"I shall sell my sketches——"

"*Sketches! Bah!*!" Lemoine had no faith in artists.

"I shall sell my sketches this afternoon," Biblio repeated, "and I shall give the money to Madame Gosse in the morning."

"Huh! Give the money to Madame Gosse! Not likely! Why, the fool wouldn't take it from you. But she's cheated me for the last time! *Madame Gosse!* Either she gets the money from you and gives it to me to-morrow, or out she goes to grub with the rest of the Quartier scum!" With this he took himself off.

"He's always like that," Biblio apologized. "When I was a little boy, I used to think he was a wild beast and that he might eat me up. Now I know he's a clown."

Betty Lee was not sure that Lemoine was a clown. "Suppose he should throw you out—he might, you know—what would you do?"

"He's showing off, that's all. He won't throw us out. He's a clown. He likes to make scenes. He won't throw us out."

Peter and Betty Lee said nothing, and in a moment or two Biblio went on, "Père Léopard has forty francs, and I shall make the rest. Enough, anyway, to pay for last week's rent. That will satisfy Lemoine. Then maybe I shall sell enough sketches to pay it all. There's nothing to worry about."

Peter was wondering about Père Léopard. "Does your old friend make any money at all, Biblio, or do you have to make enough for both?" Peter wanted to be very gentle. Not for all the world would he have hurt Biblio's feelings. "Does Père Léopard write anything besides his great history, something to sell, perhaps?"

"Yes, indeed," Biblio answered. "He writes articles for the magazines. But I hate to have him do this. It takes him away from his great work."

It is a great work, Monsieur, and when it is finished we shall never have to worry about Lemoine. The publishers tell us that the history will be one of the best histories in the world."

They had wandered toward the river, to the lower part of the Boul' Mich'. There were any number of cafés along the sidewalk, and many of the people sitting at the tables spoke to Biblio. In one of the smaller restaurants, with a red and white awning, a man left his table and came out to Biblio.

"Have you a picture for me to-day?" the man asked, screwing an eyeglass into one eye and making what Betty Lee thought a very funny face.

"I have a picture," Biblio answered, "but it is not for sale. I wouldn't sell it for anything."

"*Tiens!*" said the man, which might have meant a number of things, such as, "You don't say so!" or "It seems to me you're very stuck up this morning." Then he screwed the eyeglass, or monocle, farther into his eye.

Betty Lee wondered why it did not cut a piece out of his cheek the way Aunt Jolly's cookie molds cut her biscuit dough. While she was wondering, the man walked away.

"I thought," she said, "that you wanted to sell your picture."

"I wouldn't sell this picture," Biblio paused over the word "this," "for all the world, not even if Père Léopard and I do sleep under the bridges."

Peter raised his eyebrows. He guessed what was going to happen. Biblio might have been his own son, so well did Peter understand him.

"Why won't you sell the picture?" Betty Lee asked.

"Because it's the best one I ever did and—and—I did it for you." He thrust it into her hand. Then, because he was full of confused feelings, he darted around the corner and ran away.

"He's gone! Peter, he's gone! I didn't thank him! We don't know where he lives and we may never see him again."

"There's no such thing in the Quartier," Peter assured her, "as never seeing people again, unless they are dead. Biblio is very much alive. We'll see him to-morrow."

Betty Lee wondered. She was very much afraid that Biblio had gone for good, and it made her sad. She liked him better than anyone she knew. Betty Lee wanted ever so much to take away the wrinkle in his brow.

CHAPTER IX

Biblio Drowns the Cat who Fishes

AFTER Biblio ran away from Betty Lee and her father, he went down to the *berge*, or embankment, of the Seine. He knew a spot under the Quai de la Tournelle where the Seine was turquoise-blue. To Biblio it was like a shrine made sacred by the shadows of Notre-Dame falling upon it for centuries. Biblio did not know why he had run away. All he knew was that he could not have stayed with Betty Lee and her father after he had given her the sketch. But he was sorry now that he had acted like a simpleton. He lay down on the cobblestones right at the water's edge and let the warm sun toast his back. He lay there for more than an hour watching the water lap the rotting hulls of the river barges.

He had not forgotten the rent, but he did not feel like sketching. There were times when it was almost impossible for him to open his sketchbook and this was one of them. He knew that it was useless to try. He had tried so many times. But

Lemoine would call in the morning and refuse to be put off by Madame Gosse, without fifty francs for the last week's rent, at any rate. Biblio knew that Père Léopard had forty. "If I can make ten, that will be enough. Fifty will do. Madame Gosse will make fifty do," he thought. "Dear, wonderful Madame Gosse." Biblio could not remember the number of times she had saved them from Lemoine's tempers, but this time he knew it would take more than Madame Gosse to quiet Lemoine. "Ten francs. I must make ten francs." He sighed. There was no way to make them, except in the cafés, and no way to make them there except by selling a sketch or two.

He took one long, lingering look at the rain-water spouts on Notre-Dame. Gargoyles, they are called. All these carved two-headed cows, dwarfs with great wings, apelike creatures with horns, and donkeys with open mouths, perched up around the high walls of the Cathedral, were like old friends. Biblio loved them. Then he went up the stone steps to the Quai and sauntered to the alley called *Le Chat qui Pêche* (The Cat who Fishes). Here he sat down on the curb, took out his sketchbook, and began to work.

The sun never comes into this alley of The Cat who Fishes. Never! Hundreds of years of sunlight



Biblio loved these gargoyles of Notre-Dame

have come to Paris without creeping into this alley. During the Seventeenth Century, it was barred all day in punishment for the crimes committed in its black shadows at night. Biblio came to *Le Chat qui Pêche* only when he had to have something to make him work. It was impossible for him, no matter how unlike sketching he felt, to sit on that curb, in the miserable dirty street, and look up at the still darker walls, without putting some of their blackness, some of their mean close-together blackness, onto his paper.

He worked hard for half an hour, and then he hurried to the *Boul' Mich'*.

But he was late. The noon hour when Paris rests was over. Most of the people had left the cafés. Biblio found no customers whom he knew, and he had no luck with strangers. He went to Tolbiac and showed him the sketch of *Le Chat qui Pêche*, but Tolbiac said there were too many sketches of that *caverne* (hole in the ground). He would not buy it. Biblio went back to the café, where he had met the man with the monocle who had wanted Betty Lee's sketch of the enchanted corner. The man was there, but he seemed bored with Biblio's Cat who Fishes. So bored was he that he did not take the trouble to screw the monocle into his eye. Biblio left the

Boul' Mich' and the cafés he knew best and went to the Boulevard Raspail. In the Café Rotonde there were a few people, but they were not interested in Biblio's sketch. One Englishman looked at it, asked him how old he was and where he was studying, but did not buy the sketch. Biblio tried several other cafés along the Boulevard Raspail, but with no success. This was nothing unusual. Whenever he needed money desperately, he could sell nothing. So it seemed, at any rate. He wandered down the Rue Bonaparte, and as he passed the entrance to the garden which would have taken him to the enchanted corner, he whistled. Not for all the world would he have gone into the garden, for fear that Betty Lee and her father might guess the hard time he was having to sell this sketch when he had refused to sell the one he had given her.

He tried all the art stores along the Rue Bonaparte and the Boulevard Saint-Germain, but without success. Then he walked 'way over to the eastern end of the Quartier, to the cafés in the dirty Rue Mouffetard. He would have sold *The Cat who Fishes* for a franc or less. But there was no one who wanted to buy. He tried the near-by Pomme de Pin Restaurant, famous for writers, but apparently no writers were eating to-day.

The place was empty. Biblio made his way back to the Quai de la Tournelle. He walked all the way to the Quai d'Orsay, offering his sketch to all the booksellers and picture dealers whom he knew and to many he did not know. Nobody wanted *Le Chat qui Pêche*. He would have made another sketch in the hope of having better luck, but there was no time. Across the river in the garden of the Tuileries, the trees were standing out black against the fading sky. It was too dark to sketch, so he began all over again. Starting from the river, he went up the Boul' Mich' into the cafés he knew so well, then back to the Rotonde and the others on the Boulevard Raspail. In each the tempting odor of roasting onions and coffee made Biblio's mouth water. He had enough money in the pockets of his breeches to pay for a left-over *pâté*, but he did not want to stop until the miserable, most unlucky Cat who Fishes was sold.

But Biblio did not sell *Le Chat qui Pêche*. He waited until the evening crowd collected at the sidewalk cafés, then he tried again. By eleven o'clock his tummy was as empty as his pockets, for he had had nothing to eat since the chocolate and biscuits, with Betty Lee and her father.

Biblio was discouraged. He went home to the

Quai des Grands Augustins and threw The Cat who Fishes into the Seine. He did not watch it flutter into the dark water. He turned his back, crossed the street, and was about to climb the four long dingy flights when the monocle man stepped out of the shadows and said, "I've changed my mind and decided to take your sketch of *Le Chat qui Pêche*. I will give you ten francs for it."

Poor Biblio! The feelings that swept over him then were the kind that make grown men say terrible things, but Biblio did not swear, nor did he do anything except stare at the man with the monocle.

But there were things in his face which made the monocle man stare, too. After a minute he said again, "I've changed my mind about your sketch. I said I would give you ten francs."

Biblio turned away his face. The man's words hurt him far more than a blow would have hurt. He was stunned. But he did not want the monocle man to see, so he tried to smile, put his hands into his pockets and walked away.

"*Tiens!*" said the man with the monocle. "These artistic rats are a strange lot! And that one is the strangest of all."

Biblio walked and walked and walked. He did

not know he was walking. He knew nothing at all except that things were boiling inside of him, bubbling up and making him hate himself. Was not any sketch, any sketch at all, too good to throw into the river? And this one, this one, would have brought him ten francs. Biblio walked along the Quais until the heat of the bubbling things inside him cooled.

They did cool gradually. The night breeze from the water fanned his face, the rumble of the city, growing softer the farther west he walked, strummed in his ears like music, the music of Paris streets. Biblio knew no other. He turned and walked toward home, gazing at his bridges; their beauty seemed to fill that gnawing emptiness in his tummy. They were no ordinary bridges, no mere spans of iron and concrete and stone, but living things that threw the reflections of their lamps into the river to burst in circles of quivering fire. Before Biblio reached the end of his long walk, he had forgotten that he had drowned *The Cat who Fishes*.

Looking out of his window, as he looked every night of his life before he lay down on his rag mattress, he said to himself, as if there were no hungry pains inside of him, no rent due, no Lemoine coming in the morning, no chance of hav-

ing to sleep under the bridges with the men who made their living by washing dogs, the mattress menders, and the rag pickers, "How beautiful it is! My wonderful city with her million jewels." Then he went to sleep and did not wake until Madame Gosse pounded on the door and told them Lemoine was coming up the steps.

Biblio did not take long to wake. He ran to Père Léopard, shook him to make him open his tired eyes, collect his wits, and tell where he had hidden the forty francs.

When Lemoine banged on the door, Biblio was ready for him. He received him graciously.

But Lemoine was not in a gracious mood. He had come for money which he did not expect to get. He had come for something—if it was not to be money, it was to be something else.

"Now, my two weeks' rent! My hundred francs!" he began abruptly. There was not even a "good-morning" from him. "I want no words, no excuses, no promises. I want one hundred francs, and I want it in a hurry."

Madame Gosse, her frowsled hair more frowsled than usual, took a firm stand on her high-heeled slippers and faced Lemoine. "If you will—" she began.

Lemoine pushed her aside. "I want none of

your interference. Keep out of this, or you'll go out with the others! Out to lie along the embankments." Lemoine turned to Père Léopard, who was shivering by his bedside. "Now, sir, give me my money. I've no time to stand here in this dirty attic. Give me my hundred francs, or I'll see to it that I'll never have to collect rent from you or anyone like you again."

Père Léopard was not a man to answer insults rapidly. He never spoke hastily. At this particular moment, he could not speak at all.

Biblio stepped forward. "Here are forty francs, Monsieur. I will have the other ten by to-night. I shall sell a picture. By the end of the week I shall have the rest, the other fifty for this week's rent."

Lemoine shook his fist at Biblio.

"By the end of this week there will be another fifty francs due me for another week." He grabbed the forty from Biblio, and then he did something that terrified Père Léopard.

He strode across the floor and gathered up an armful of the old man's books. "These are musty trash, but they're better than nothing. They'll bring something! I'll take them. I'll take them. If you don't pay by day after to-morrow, I'll sell them. Then if you don't pay, I'll throw you out

for good and all." With this Lemoine stamped across the floor and slammed the door behind him.

Père Léopard covered his face with his hands. "*Mes petits choux*" [my little cabbages], "*mes petits choux*," he sobbed. "He took them. Why did you let him take them, Biblio? Didn't you have any money? Couldn't you get anything yesterday for your sketches? Oh! Biblio, why did you let him take them?"

Madame Gosse answered: "Don't worry, Père Léopard. Biblio will sell something this morning. He will go and get the books from the old *chameau*" (camel—a vulgar, really very vulgar name to call anyone, but Madame Gosse used vulgar names for people who hurt Biblio).

"I'll hurry out, make a sketch and sell it in a jiffy," said Biblio, trying to comfort Père Léopard. The old man might have been six years old and Biblio sixty, when things like this occurred in the studio. It was Biblio, always Biblio, who took such matters in hand. "Stay with him, Madame Gosse. Make him some coffee and make it strong. He'll need it strong! I'll be back with the money before noon." Biblio jumped into his clothes, grabbed a crust of bread, and ran straight to the alley of The Cat who Fishes.

He made three sketches. He did them as well as he could, but he did not stop to think whether or not they were good. He hurried with them to the monocle man's apartment.

The monocle man had not opened his own eyes, let alone put his glass one into place. Until this bit of form was done he was sure to be grumpy. He glared at Biblio and asked him why, in the name of all sorts of things, he had come thundering on his door at that ungodly hour.

Biblio said he was sorry, that he did not know it was an ungodly hour.

The monocle man squinted at his sketches. One of them he held upside down so that the steep walls of the houses in the street of Le Chat qui Pêche fell apart like a V, instead of toppling together like an A. But he bought all three sketches and handed Biblio seventy-five francs. "Now," he said, "not another sketch this week! Run along and don't come near me again! When I want something, I'll hunt for you."

Biblio did not know how good his sketches were. Nor did he know that the man with the monocle was a well-known judge of charcoal drawing.

Biblio did not know this, but he did know that he was the happiest of all the people in the

world that warm morning when the Quartier trees had sprung into full bloom. He did not run, but flew to the house of Lemoine.

Before the noon bells pealed from the thousand and one spires of the city, he returned the *choux* into Père Léopard's shaky hands to be caressed and petted as if they were babies instead of moldy calfskin books.

Ten minutes after this Biblio returned with three meat *pâtés*, a head of lettuce, and a bottle, not a *demi* or half bottle, but a quart-sized bottle of red wine. After this feast with Père Léopard. Biblio lost no time in running to the garden.

He waited all afternoon in the enchanted corner. He tried to imagine which path Betty Lee and her father would choose, and which of the many stiff iron chairs they would rent, and which of the fat pigeons would succeed in getting the crumbs they offered.

Biblio waited until it was time for the garden to close, but Betty Lee and her father did not come.

CHAPTER X

The Patient Pigeon

WHILE Biblio tried to sell The Cat who Fishes, Betty Lee and Peter waited in the garden. By four o'clock, when he did not come, they went shopping. They did not want to, but they went for Aunt Jolly.

“Send me all the pretty frocks you can afford to buy,” Aunt Jolly had written. “I should like to copy them for Betty Lee. It will not seem so lonely here if I am sewing on frocks.”

The letter from Aunt Jolly had been full of news. Dinwiddie came every morning to Meadow-larks to talk about Betty Lee. Diddy Duncum was growing tall and fat. “He’s on my skirt tails all day long and asks twenty times a day, ‘Whar am de pretty lady?’” Hippoleon had taken up his post at the front door and refused to leave day or night. “I’m glad he stays there,” Aunt Jolly wrote, “because he looks fierce and will keep away the tramps. Swan is delighted because the wood-kitties have grown up and the mother

wood-kitty has moved to someone else's barn." Aunt Jolly described how pleased all the "pitifuls" had been with their share of the wonderful ship.

The morning after the shopping expedition, Betty Lee read Aunt Jolly's letter for the fifth time. It had been tucked under the pillow. Munching her *petit pain* and sharing her hot milk with the three black cats, Betty Lee called out to her father that she would like to write Aunt Jolly about Biblio.

Peter did not mind waiting while she wrote her letter. He settled himself comfortably by the open window to read the morning paper, *Le Matin*. The cats, thoroughly satisfied by this time, purred on the broad window ledge beside him.

Betty Lee wrote her letter. In the middle of the first page she stopped. "Peter, do you think, do you really think we shall ever see Biblio again?"

Peter's pipe seemed inclined to go out, he gave an extra long puff before he answered, then he looked at his watch and said, "It's nine o'clock now, dear. I have a feeling we shall find Biblio in the garden and be eating biscuits together at Madame Trèfle's before eleven."

They were.

Biblio did not tell them what a hard time he had had when he drowned The Cat who Fishes. Nor did he tell how disagreeable Lemoine had been, and that he had taken Père Léopard's "little cabbages." He told them of his great luck, that he had sold three sketches to the man with a monocle. "Think of it. Three at once! It more than paid the rent. Père Léopard and I had a feast."

After the visit to Madame Trèfle they wound their way back to the garden and rented chairs along the edge of the pond near the sailboat man. They fed the goldfish, great fat, pop-eyed goldfish they were, and greedy, too. They swarmed at the edge of the pond and made eager dives for the crumbs Betty Lee threw them.

Biblio was talking about Père Léopard's great book. "It's the history of Paris, you know, the most wonderful one ever written. It has taken years and years and still there is a great deal more to be done. He hasn't gone any further than the French Revolution. He says he will never finish that part."

"How far back in the history of Paris does Père Léopard go?" Peter asked.

"To the very beginning. The first chapter tells about the meeting of the conquered Gauls in the

Ile de la Cité in 58 b. c. That's where Notre-Dame is now, but the island wasn't called Ile de la Cité then. It was called Lutèce."

"Remember our poem of the ruling 'houses,' Peter? I wish we had had Biblio to draw the 'houses.' They would have been beautiful."

"If we had had Biblio with us when we were writing that history, Betty Lee, we could have put in many things to make it more interesting. What does Père Léopard write about next, Biblio?"

"He tells about the Romans and their palaces. You can see pieces of the stone baths in the Palais des Thermes which was a kind of bathing place belonging to Prince Julian who became Emperor in the year 360."

Betty Lee wondered about this long-ago Roman prince. She was sure he was not so charming as "Prince Biblio." "It was Clovis who conquered the Romans, wasn't it?" Then Betty Lee repeated the rhyme about Clovis.

"Clovis, King of all the Franks,
Saved most of Gaul from Roman pranks,
Later Merovingian Kings
Were just a crowd of 'Do-nothings.'"

Peter's eyes twinkled. "Let's see if you can translate that into French for Biblio."

Her translation did not rhyme very well, but it seemed to please Biblio. He liked the way she had of keeping oh! so still when she thought very hard.

Peter was asking about Clovis, so Biblio told them that it had been Childebert, the son of Clovis, who had begun the great Cathedral of Notre-Dame.

“That was in the Sixth Century. Isn’t it wonderful to think how long it has been beautiful!” Biblio never tired of thinking about Notre-Dame and he spent half an hour making sketches for Betty Lee of his favorite gargoyles. “Nothing very interesting happened in Paris, so Père Léopard says, during the Carolingian time, except toward the end, when the Norman pirates came.”

“I know all about them, too, Biblio,” Betty Lee interrupted. “Count Odo or Bodo, which was it, Peter?”

“Odo,” answered Peter.

“Count Odo saved Paris. Then his nephew, Hugh Capet, was made King. Wasn’t that it?” Betty Lee asked.

Biblio nodded and asked them if they had written a rhyme about Odo.

Peter took his pipe out of his mouth, made

a funny face, and struggled with a translation of:

Norman pirates then we know
Were held in check by Count Odo.

Biblio laughed and wrote down the rhyme to show to Père Léopard. "Did you write any about the 'house' of Valois and François Villon? You would love him, Betteelée. He wrote poetry the way you do. He was wonderful. His statue is in the dirty old Rue Ronge. It's just as dirty now as it was in the reign of Louis the Eleventh."

"The 'house' of Valois with old King Louis the Eleventh is one of my favorite 'houses,'" said Betty Lee. "But I never heard of François Villon. What did he have to do with Louis the Eleventh?"

Biblio loved to tell the story of the beggar poet. "Once upon a time the King overheard Villon say, 'If I were King, I should know how to handle these Burgundians!' Louis made him King for a day on the condition that he be hanged at sunrise. In that one day, under François Villon's leadership, the enemy was driven from the gates of Paris, and Villon did not hang—he married a Princess instead."

"We'll go and look at the statue to-morrow,"

said Peter. "That is, if Biblio will show us the way. I don't think I have ever been there."

"I'd like to take you very much, but——"

Peter understood. "It's dirty, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's very dirty, and someone might pick your pockets." Biblio was looking at Betty Lee and thinking how fresh and clean she looked, how unlike the district around the Rue Mouffetard and the Rue Ronge. He hoped they would not ask him again to take them, and he began talking about the history. "Père Léopard loves the Bourbons. He does not write much about the end of the 'house' of Valois when the Protestants and the Catholics were killing each other. But he has written pages and pages about Henry the Fourth and his Italian wife, Marie de' Medici.

"I am glad she came to Paris, because she built my lovely garden," continued Biblio.

"This garden, you mean?" asked Betty Lee.

"Yes," said Biblio, and looked at the swarm of goldfish splashing about and pushing each other out of the way so as to get the crumbs. Then he went on speaking of the Bourbons. "See that round dome over there? That's the Panthéon. It's a burial place now for distinguished citizens. But it used to be a church. Louis the Fifteenth was very ill one day, and he promised Sainte-

Geneviève he would build a church in her honor if she would pray for him. It was Sainte-Geneviève's prayers, you know, that saved Paris from being destroyed by Attila the Hun."

Betty Lee knew all about Sainte-Geneviève and repeated her verse:

"Geneviève prayed God to spare
Her Paris from the Huns' warfare."

The goldfish refused to believe that there were no more biscuits, and Biblio tried to make them understand. Then he said, "Père Léopard likes Louis the Fifteenth least of all the Bourbons."

"I agree with Père Léopard," said Peter. "I like him least, too. You know, I'd like to talk with Père Léopard. Do you think he is too busy writing his book to spare Betty Lee and me a few minutes? We should love to call on him, shouldn't we, dear?"

Betty Lee said yes, indeed, that she would.

Then Peter asked Biblio if he would like to go to Versailles.

"Oh! Monsieur, I'd rather go to Versailles than any place in the world." So it was settled that they were to go the next day.

Biblio walked with them as far as the gate in the southwest corner, the enchanted corner of

the garden. They stopped a minute under the bent sycamore and said good-evening to the pigeons.

While they were here, a gamin with a wizened face crept up behind Betty Lee and shot the pigeon nearest to her.

It fell at her feet.

Biblio sprang after the gamin. Biblio knew the way of gamins and lost no time diving into the bushes. He did not think the boy had run there. He just felt it, and his instinct made him lunge forward to the right spot. Biblio was not a minute too soon. An instant more and the boy would have wriggled out the other side of the shrubbery.

But Biblio caught him by the leg and dragged him into the open square.

All the while the boy, who seemed more like a rat than a boy, squirmed and kicked and howled. Some of the words he used were awful words, things which made Biblio want to strangle him.

Peter ran to the rescue and stuffed the evil mouth with a handkerchief.

Then Biblio, still kneeling on the boy's middle, pried open his fist, took away the sling-shot, and punched him in a way that even a rat-faced gamin would not be likely to forget.



When Biblio released him, the miserable boy slunk off, making hideous faces.

Biblio came to look at the pigeon. "I think a little water would do him good, Betteelée. Shall I go and get some?" but before she had time to say, "Yes," he had hurried off.

While Biblio was gone, Peter helped Betty Lee encourage the pigeon. They told it not to worry, that in a little while it would be all right again, and not to struggle or try to get up.

Maybe the creature understood. At any rate, it lay still and began to breathe easily.

Biblio came back with the water and began to give it little drops from the end of his finger. He seemed to know just how to do this, and in a few minutes the pigeon began to breathe quietly, blink its round eyes and settle down.

Betty Lee stroked its back. "We'll go home

now, young man, home to my house and have a little warm milk. Then we'll have a good night's sleep and be all well in the morning."

"He would travel more comfortably if he had a basket to ride in," said Biblio, and hurried off a second time. He returned in a minute with the most cozy of traveling compartments for the injured pigeon. "My friend the *Guignol* woman gave it to me, and she said to feed the pigeon a teaspoonful of black coffee. She says there is nothing better for sick pigeons than black coffee."

"I do not think," said Peter, "that there will be any more 'sick' pigeons for some time. At any rate, I know one boy who will think a long while before he does any more shooting."

"I must go now," said Biblio. "I promised to give *Père Léopard* a *pâté* for lunch. I'll be waiting for you in the garden to-morrow."

"About noon, Biblio. We shall have lunch before we start to Versailles," said Peter.

Betty Lee began to thank Biblio for punishing the boy who shot the pigeon, but before she had time to say all that she wanted, he had to leave.

She and Peter walked home slowly so as not to joggle their guest in the basket. Planning to go to Versailles the next day had made her remem-

ber the poem she had written about the French Revolution. She murmured:

"The dawn of eighteen hundred
Was creeping over France,
A thousand unseen terrors
Were waiting to advance."

Betty Lee smiled at her father. "Think of it, Peter, think of it. To-morrow we are going to see Versailles. Do you think the pigeon will be well in the morning? And if he is not, do you think we could take him with us? I should hate to leave him alone in the room if he were feeling bad. What do you suppose made that horrid boy want to shoot a pigeon?" She was peeking into the basket at the injured traveler.

Peter told her something about gamins.

Betty Lee tried to picture to herself, as she listened to her father, what it would be like to belong to no one and to live nowhere, almost nowhere at all, with oh! so very little to eat, and never anything new to wear. After a while she said, "Biblio has no mother or father. I am sure he goes without food often, and his clothes are all shabby. What makes *him* a gentleman?"

"That beautiful something in him," answered Peter, "that is going to make him a great artist."

CHAPTER XI

An Insult

THE pigeon slept well all night. But he did not enjoy the black coffee suggested by the Guignol woman. He preferred Betty Lee's *petit pain*.

"Everyone in Paris wants to eat my *petit pain*," she said to Peter. "It is a good thing we have hot chocolate and biscuits about eleven. I'd starve." She turned to the pigeon. "Are you quite well, my *chou*?" She had adopted Père Léopard's pet cabbage name for the invalid. "Do you think you are well enough to fly?" The pigeon answered with a coo, and thinking that it was trying to say that it felt very well indeed, she lifted it gently and carried it to the window. "Now! Do you think you can fly about with your friends? I suppose these are your friends, all these young fellows on Peterkin's window sill?"

The maid, Marie, came in just then with more *petit pain*. She was interested in the bird and

suggested giving it black coffee before allowing it to take flight.

Betty Lee laughed. The *Guignol* woman, Marie, and in fact all French people, had one idea: coffee. No matter what was wrong, coffee would help. She knew that the pigeon did not like this cure for all ills, but not wanting to spoil Marie's pleasure, she said nothing, just watched her offer a drop or two.

Maybe the pigeon wasn't French. At any rate, he did not like that black coffee any more than he had liked what Betty Lee had tried to give him the night before.

Suddenly he stretched his wings and flew away.

"*Là !*" exclaimed Marie, which was her way of saying, "There, isn't it wonderful!"

Betty Lee and Peter found Biblio in the garden as the concert of midday chimes began. They went to a small *café* on the *Île Saint-Louis*.

"You can see the flying buttresses of the Cathedral better there than from any other spot in the city," Biblio had told them.

Neither Peter nor Betty Lee had known the word *arc-boutant*, and Betty Lee was not sure that she knew what a buttress was. But when they came to the *Café Coc Hardie* on the *Rue des Deux Ponts*, it was not difficult to guess which



*“I always think of Notre-Dame with her
arms raised”*

were the buttresses. Like great wings they spread from the sides of the cathedral.

Biblio repeated a few lines from a poem which Père Léopard had taught him:

“Her tall twin towers—those canticles of stone—
Drawn with great streaks upon the fiery sky,
Seem like two mighty arms upraised in prayer
To God, by Paris ere she sinks to sleep.

Théophile Gautier wrote that one evening from a place near here. I always think of Notre-Dame with her arms raised like that, in prayer.”

Betty Lee could not understand all of the French poem, and she asked Biblio to say it again slowly.

By the time he had finished, the waiter with a green baize apron brought a tray of hors d’œuvre. Making up one’s mind which of the tempting things to choose was difficult. The waiter, seeing no doubt that this choosing would take some time, left the tray on the table and went away. Betty Lee took tiny sardines speckled with shredded lemon and some curled-up fish. Peter selected stuffed eggs smothered in pink sauce, and Biblio, who had never eaten expensive hors d’œuvre, helped himself modestly to one slice of tomato. Peter understood and filled his

little friend's dish while he was not looking, or rather while he was looking at Betty Lee.

Biblio was thinking what a lovely picture she would make with her bright blue eyes and her golden curls, and her frock the color of the Seine in its pale green mood.

Betty Lee did not know that Biblio was looking at her. She was busy eating her curled-up fish. Suddenly she laid down her skinny, two-pronged hors-d'œuvre fork and exclaimed, "Père Léopard! Is he having any lunch? Let's go and get him to come and have lunch with us."

Biblio could not make her understand that Père Léopard would rather work than eat. She and Peter were determined to take the old man on a spree. Nothing Biblio said had any effect, and secretly he liked the idea of Père Léopard's sharing those tidbits.

They explained to the waiter what they were going to do; then they set out for Père Léopard. Both Peter and Betty Lee had many thoughts, sad thoughts they were, too, as they climbed the four long, dark flights in Biblio's lodging house. They tried not to notice the crumbling plaster and the broken steps. It made Betty Lee's heart ache to think of a boy like Biblio, who loved everything beautiful, living in this place. She

thought of her own home and had difficulty in keeping back a tear.

As usual, Père Léopard had locked the door to prevent interruptions, but Biblio thumped the customary signal, and at length the old man opened the door and stood staring at them.

“He’s a grizzled, bent old darling,” thought Betty Lee, and offered him her hand. “We’re friends of Biblio’s, Père Léopard. We’ve come to take you to lunch with us. Please do not say that you won’t come.”

Père Léopard did not say anything, for the sight of these strangers had taken away his breath.

Biblio explained quickly that Betty Lee and Monsieur Gray were good friends of his. “I hope you won’t mind coming, Père Léopard. They want you very much,” and he whispered, “There’s a trayful of tidbits.”

“Hors d’œuvre?” Père Léopard raised his eyebrows.

“I think so,” said Biblio.

“Don’t feel that you have to come with us, Père Léopard.” Peter was attracted to this worn-out old bookworm. There was something sad about his trying to finish a great history before his strength gave out. “If you will come to lunch

with us, Père Léopard, we shall consider it a great favor. It isn't every day that my daughter and I can dine with an author."

Père Léopard smiled, and a million or more wrinkles appeared around his mouth. "I'll come," he nodded. "I've not had hors d'œuvre for fifty years."

Biblio led the way into the studio. "These are all the 'little cabbages,'" he pointed to the stacks of books on the floor. "Père Léopard loves them as if they were his children. He can reach out his hand and find them in the dark. If any one of them were to be moved, he would know in a jiffy."

"Has he read them all?" asked Betty Lee.

"Many, many times, and some of them he knows by heart."

Père Léopard was looking doubtfully at the sleeves of his coat. There was one distinct hole, and several threadbare spots. "I'm not a beautiful sight," the old man said to Peter. "I hope your little daughter won't mind eating with a bundle of rags." He was brushing his grizzled hair and trying to make whatever it was around his neck look like a tie. Shall I do as I am?" he asked, turning to Peter.

Something in Peter's blue eyes put the old fellow at his ease. He forgot about his shabbiness and began to talk about his books and the great history he was writing. There came near being no lunch, after all.

Biblio was trying to hide the broken pane of glass in the window while he showed the view to Betty Lee. "No place in the world has a more beautiful view," he told her. "No place in the world where you can feel the day and the night coming up from nowhere."

She thought it was beautiful, but sad, dreadfully sad. She had seen the broken windowpane but was pretending not to notice while she agreed with Biblio that the Seine was beautiful. Then she suggested going back to lunch. "Do you think you can drag Père Léopard away from his 'little cabbages'?"

Biblio said, "I'll try," went over to Père Léopard and whispered, "Don't forget the tidbits."

After lunch, the kind of lunch that made the old man remember what lunches could be, they were able to persuade him that he wanted to go with them to Versailles.

All the way in the tram with its two cars

hitched together like Dinwiddie's toy trains, the old poem kept running through Betty Lee's head:

The dawn of eighteen hundred
Was creeping over France,
A thousand unseen terrors
Were waiting to advance.

The end of it was most persistent.

Pale ghosts of old-time power
Steal through its halls to die.

Betty Lee would have liked to translate the poem for Biblio, but there was not time, and, besides, it was too difficult.

Versailles, great palace of great kings! Versailles, with its brilliant memories and its tragic shadows! Versailles, filled with echoes to be heard by all those who tread its polished floors or wander along its moss-grown paths. Versailles, where the treaty of America's independence was signed by England, France, and Spain! Versailles, where red torches flared on the first massacre of the French Revolution. Versailles, where the Prussians celebrated the victory that tore Alsace and Lorraine from France! Versailles, where the peace treaty of the World War was signed in 1919! Versailles which no one wants to see except with thoughtful people who will be still and feel

its secrets! Whom should Betty Lee and Peter meet here when they came with Biblio and Père Léopard but HESTER MEGGS! Hester Meggs with her small, closely set eyes and her mouth like a croquet wicket, her whining voice and her cruelty.

Peter was fond of Hester's father. They had been friends for many years, and Peter, who found it difficult to be rude to anyone, could not be rude to this old friend and his daughter, although he knew they would ruin what otherwise might be a perfect day. Introductions were painful because Hester Meggs did not understand French nor could she understand Père Léopard and Biblio. Betty Lee was afraid that something might happen to hurt her friends' feelings, so she whispered to Peter that she would go through the palace with Hester and her father, while he and Biblio and Père Léopard went together. This was a great disappointment, because Betty Lee had dreamed so long of seeing all the wonderful things in Versailles with her father.

Thanks to her unselfishness, nothing happened while they were going through the palace, and there might not have been any trouble if Peter had not been forced to accept an invitation to ride back to Paris in the Meggs's car.

When it was time to start, Betty Lee did not notice that Père Léopard and Biblio were not in the car. She climbed into the front seat with Hester to prevent Biblio's having to sit beside her, thinking, of course, that Biblio and Père Léopard were to ride in the back with Peter and Mr. Meggs.

Peter discovered that neither Biblio nor Père Léopard was in the car nor anywhere in sight. "Where are our friends Monsieur Léopard and the boy Biblio?" he asked.

Mr. Meggs had not the least idea.

"Hester," her father asked, "where are Père Léopard and Biblio?"

Betty Lee knew something was wrong. She jumped out of the car and ran to her father. Peter was trying to be patient and to listen to his friend's child finish her whining explanation.

"I told your friends," Hester Meggs was saying, "that you did not want to crowd my father and me and that you hoped they would not mind going back to Paris by tram."

"You—you—asked Père Léopard and Biblio to go—"

Then Betty Lee took her up father's sentence—"You asked them to take the tram, and you let them think we wanted them to go that way?"

OH!" Tears were filling Betty Lee's eyes, hot, angry tears. "How could you! How could you?"

Hester Meggs's mouth looked more than ever like a croquet wicket. Poor Mr. Meggs was red in the face and very angry. Peter felt sorry for him and said it did not matter, because they would be able to catch *Père Léopard* and *Biblio* if they hurried.

The Meggs's chauffeur did the best he could, but he did not reach the tram station in time. There was only one tram waiting, and it was empty. The other had just left for Paris.

Gripping her father's hand, Betty Lee faced Hester Meggs and said, "I think you're the meanest, *meanest*, most cruel girl in the world."

Mr. Meggs and Peter shook hands sadly. "I think," said the poor father, "that the best thing to do with Hester is to send her to a strict school."

Peter squeezed his hand and said nothing. But they did not go back to Paris in the Meggs's car.

Waiting for the tram to start Betty Lee asked Peter if he thought *Père Léopard* and *Biblio* would feel very bad.

"They're too intelligent," Peter answered, "but I am sure they are disappointed."

"Do you think they believe we asked her to

tell them to take the tram? Would they think we could do such a thing?"

Peter could not be sure, but he said he intended to make sure.

They stopped at the studio on their way home, and they found Père Léopard and Biblio worrying over the fact that they had not been able to say "thank you" for the wonderful afternoon. "That young lady," they explained, "asked us not to try to say good-bye to you because you were in a hurry."

"*Oh!*" exclaimed Betty Lee, the tears springing to her eyes again. "I did not know anyone could make up such stories."

Biblio and Père Léopard had been sure that there was some mistake. "Mademoiselle Meggs seemed so afraid we should follow you to the car to say good-bye. I knew it was a mistake, Betteelée."

"They *were* hurt," she said on their way down the four dark flights.

"A little, I think," said Peter, "but it is all right now. While you were talking to Père Léopard, Biblio promised me that he would meet us in the garden to-morrow and take us to three of his favorite places in the Quartier."

"Which three are they?"

"Notre-Dame from a certain spot which he called 'his' bridge, the Pont des Arts, I think it is, a garden near the old Abbaye Prison where hundreds of people were slaughtered during the reign of terror, and a spot in the center of the Place de l'Observatoire where you look into the garden at sunset."

"Is he going to meet us in time for lunch, and will Père Léopard come, too?"

"Biblio did not think that Père Léopard would leave his work again so soon, but he promised me to ask him. Biblio said he would come surely."

But Biblio did not come to the garden the next day. Peter and Betty Lee waited until half after one, and then Peter, seeing her disappointment, decided that the time had come to interest her in other friends. He suggested going to call upon Monsieur le Comte Albert Saint-Simon de Rastignac and his wife Madame la Comtesse with her collection of first names in honor of distinguished members of the family.

"What are her names?" Betty Lee asked.

"Some of them are Cécile, Marie, Jacqueline, Susanne, Josephine, and there are one or two others which I have forgotten."

Betty Lee wanted to know if there were any

children, and Peter told her that there were usually many children in aristocratic French families, and that they looked like steps in a stairway. He supposed Rastignac children would be the same.

"I think I shall like them, Peter, but do you think they will like me?"

"They may not know what to make of you. Your coming will be an adventure. The Rastignacs never see anyone except other Rastignacs and aunts and uncles and cousins. They probably would not be allowed to see us if it were not that their father and I were very dear friends."

"Mercy!" said Betty Lee. "I'm frightened."

Peter chuckled again, and told her she need not be, that if there were going to be anyone frightened in this strange meeting, it would be the Rastignac children.

CHAPTER XII

Betty Lee Makes a Courtesy to a Countess

BETTY LEE clutched her father's hand as they stood at the door of the square white house of the Rastignacs on the Rue Saint-Dominique. There were fluttery feelings inside of her. "Peter, what must I say? What must I do?"

"Say and do just what you would say and do every day. I am proud of you as you are. Deep down in their hearts the Rastignac children are no different from Diddy Duncum, a little less happy, perhaps. Sh; here comes the butler."

She liked the butler and smiled at him. It was probably the first time in the old fellow's life that a visitor had smiled upon him. The color mounted to his fat face, and he would have liked to smile back if he had known how. But the Rastignac butlers had had immovable faces for centuries. With a series of stiff bows he showed them into a large high-ceiled room. The place smelled something like an attic and something like a cellar. The curtains were drawn and the

furniture covered with black and white striped dusters. "Are they going away for the summer?" Betty Lee whispered. "Why is everything shut up?"

"Sh," said Peter. "The windows are seldom opened, and the curtains are never parted. The Rastignacs want to protect their furniture."

Betty Lee could not help it, but right then and there she began to feel sorry for the Rastignac children.

In a few minutes Madame la Comtesse came into the room. She did not exactly come into the room, she drifted in, silently like a black shadow. Madame la Comtesse de Rastignac had lost a great-uncle four years before and she was still in heavy mourning for him. Everything about her seemed black, and most black of all were the circles under her eyes. When she smiled, which she did as Peter bent to kiss her hand, Betty Lee noticed how thin her lips were, and how dreadfully long her nose.

Betty Lee courtesied when the Countess spoke to her, and then they all sat down. The Countess said the children were in the garden, and she asked Peter to pull a velvet rope hanging beside the door. Peter pulled the rope, and presently the butler came. Madame la Comtesse sent him for

Mademoiselle Desmoulins, the governess, to take Betty Lee to the garden.

Following the strange, sharp-nosed, black-eyed Mademoiselle Desmoulins through these long dark halls made the shivers creep up and down Betty Lee's spine. She could not help wondering what poor Peter would do sitting so straight in that dark room with the Countess. "Perhaps," thought Betty Lee, "his old friend, the Count, will come and take him somewhere else, where it's more cheerful." She hoped so, at any rate. Mademoiselle Desmoulins said nothing at all to her as they made their way—a long way it seemed to Betty Lee—to the garden. "I wonder if she is angry. I wonder why she doesn't speak," but after looking hard at Mademoiselle Desmoulins, Betty Lee decided that she did not speak because she was unhappy. "She'd like to speak," thought Betty Lee.

Betty Lee loved the Rastignac garden the moment she looked at it. It might have been the garden at Meadowlarks, except for the high stone walls. All the Rastignac children came in a line to meet her. She liked Antoinette instantly, because she smiled as she came up in her turn to make a courtesy. After this formal introduction Mademoiselle Desmoulins asked Lucille and An-

toinette to take Betty Lee to their table in the corner of the garden where they were learning to embroider.

Betty Lee sat down on a small iron chair and said pleasantly, "It's awfully nice of you to let me come. My father has talked about your father to me, and I love coming to see you."

Antoinette smiled, but Lucille looked as if she could not understand how anyone could say such a thing.

Antoinette, who was the only one of the Rastignac children like her father, and whose eyes held something merry in them which was not in the eyes of the others, said, "You're the first American I have ever met. When Father told me you were coming I could not go to sleep. I thought you would be dressed like an Indian. I've seen pictures of American Indians."

Betty Lee burst out laughing. But she stopped suddenly when she caught sight of Antoinette's frightened expression. "How white she is! What's frightened her, I wonder?" thought Betty Lee. Then she saw that Mademoiselle Desmoulins was glaring at them and that her eyes were shining like pointed daggers. Betty Lee said no more.

Aunt Jolly had taught her how to embroider,

so she took up the strand of wool that Antoinette was offering and began to thread the large-eyed needle. No one said anything at all for hours and hours, it seemed to Betty Lee, and then Mademoiselle Desmoulins said it was time to go in to make "a little piano."

Betty Lee thought that both Antoinette and Lucille shivered at the mention of the word "piano." "Poor dears," she said to herself. "They don't want to go, and neither do I," and without knowing that she was doing something unheard of in the Rastignac family, Betty Lee suggested that they do not go in for "a little piano" but stay in the garden where the breeze smelled of roses and the sunlight was growing pink.

Mademoiselle Desmoulins stared and said nothing. The *nounous*, or nursemaids, had heard the signal "piano" and understood that it was time to take the younger children to the nursery. Betty Lee would have liked to go over and hug one of the little Rastignacs, who reminded her of Dinwiddie, and she would have liked to talk with the boys. One had very large sad eyes, and the other was homely, but she would have liked to hear what they had to say. As it was, they had not spoken above a whisper and had stayed in a far corner of the garden. Now they were

taking up their books and following the *nounous* and the little children.

“Do we have to go indoors?” Betty Lee asked again. But Antoinette gave her hand a pinch. Lucille was already halfway across the garden.

The *nounous* with the little children and the boys disappeared. Betty Lee followed Mademoiselle Desmoulins, Lucille, and Antoinette into a gold and green dark room with a very slippery floor, like the one in the Palace of Versailles. All the great windows were closed, and the heavy curtains drawn to keep out the sunlight. Betty Lee felt as if she were going to smother, and the “little piano” was awful. Mademoiselle Desmoulins thought that everything Antoinette and Lucille played was wrong, and Betty Lee thought that Mademoiselle Desmoulins played worse than either of them. Betty Lee could not help thinking of her happy days with her father in the wonderful old schoolroom at Meadowlarks. How unlike this piano was from the dear squat one with its stub legs, and Peter’s, with a curve in its back. It was a wonderful moment when he appeared at the door and said it was time to go home.

“Oh, Peter, Peter! Those poor little girls! Oh, I’m so glad I belong to you and not the Countess

whatever her names are." She skipped along beside her father. "Peter, they don't dare to breathe! They're frightened to death, even the boys. What are they afraid of? Oh, I'm so sorry for them, especially Antoinette. I like her. She was very sweet to me."

"We are invited," Peter said, "to come any afternoon after three. Do you want to go to-morrow?"

"Yes, indeed. It's like taking part in a play. Perhaps Lucille will not look at me so strangely, and then, then I like Antoinette. She's not pretty. Her nose is too long, but there's something pretty about the way she does things. Poor Antoinette. Aunt Jolly would weep if she saw her frock and Lucille's frock. They're so funny and long and stiff and all made from the same piece of silk. It was taffeta silk, Peter, dark pinky-lavender taffeta silk. If Aunt Jolly had silk like that she would give it to the darkies. Why do the Rastignac children have to be dressed that way? I thought French children had stylish clothes."

Peter explained that it was not considered dignified for children of aristocratic families to wear modern clothes.

"Poor Antoinette," thought Betty Lee. "How she would love to play with us at Meadowlarks."

“Shall we go to the Rastignacs’ to-morrow afternoon?” Peter asked again that evening while they were strolling in the garden of the Tuileries feeding the goldfish.

“I’d like to go if we cannot find Biblio. I’d rather play with him than with the Rastignacs. Do you think he will be in our corner of the garden?”

Biblio was not in the garden the next afternoon, nor the next, nor any afternoon for a long while. They looked for him each day, and when they did not find him they would go to the Rastignacs’.

Betty Lee liked Antoinette better each day, and felt more and more sorry for the others. Lucille seemed so white, the boys so quiet and unnatural. The little ones were afraid of the *nounous*, the *nounous* were afraid of Mademoiselle Desmoulins.

“But I love the garden, and it’s like being in a play, Peter, for when I’m there I feel as if I were not Betty Lee Gray but some other person. It’s lots of fun, but, oh, it’s good to go home with you and be myself!”

Every afternoon she said something like this to Peter on the way home, and every afternoon

she talked to him about Biblio and whether or not they should go to the attic on the Quai des Grands Augustins to see why he did not come to the garden. Every afternoon it was decided to wait a little longer, because they agreed if Biblio could come he would, and if he could not, it might be difficult for him to explain.

“You don’t suppose that his feelings are hurt because of Hester Meggs?” Each time she asked, Peter assured her that he did not believe any such thing. But both of them were disappointed, Peter because he had grown fond of Biblio, and Betty Lee because he was the dark-eyed Prince with a wrinkle in his brow.

One afternoon when she went to the great white house on the Rue Saint-Dominique she found, much to her surprise, that Mademoiselle Desmoulins was planning to take them all for a walk. This happened, it seemed, every other Thursday afternoon.

Betty Lee was delighted and hoped that there would be a chance to play. But it seemed that the Rastignacs never played. When they walked, they just walked and walked and walked. Never in all her life had Betty Lee felt so tired! There was no end to that long, tiresome walk. The

Rastignacs did not mind, and none of them appeared to be tired. On and on they went, through the Tuileries, along the Champs Elysées to the Place de l'Étoile and on to the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne. Betty Lee thought they would never turn back, but she was the only one who thought the walk long.

At last they turned back, and they were just leaving the garden of the Tuileries and turning onto the Avenue Paul-Déroulède when a tiny brown puppy, scarcely beyond the wabbly stage, a gamin of a puppy, appeared as if from nowhere and ran off the sidewalk directly under an automobile. This happened close to the Rastignac children, the *nounous*, and Mademoiselle Desmoulins, but Antoinette and Betty Lee were the only ones who saw the car strike the puppy.

Before Mademoiselle Desmoulins could stop her, Betty Lee was out in the crowded street, down on her hands and knees, picking up the bloody, limp puppy. By this time there was much commotion among the crowd on the sidewalk.

“Put it down! PUT IT DOWN!” commanded Mademoiselle Desmoulins.

But Betty Lee paid no attention. The puppy was real. Mademoiselle Desmoulins was not real. At any rate, so it seemed to Betty Lee. She did

not mean to disobey, nor did she mean to cause any trouble. But it would have been impossible for her to drop the wounded puppy.

"If you don't put that disgusting bleeding dog down at once, we will have to leave you here alone in the street! PUT IT DOWN AT ONCE!" Mademoiselle Desmoulins was really very close to tears.

Betty Lee was sitting on the curb examining the puppy's injuries. They were bloody but not serious. She was so intent upon this that she did not realize she was the center of an excited group of governesses, *nounous*, and children. The first thing that she heard, when she had made sure the little puppy was not going to die and when she had him snuggled comfortably in her arms, was Antoinette telling her over and over again that she had better put the puppy down, that Mademoiselle Desmoulins was very angry, *very* angry. Then she heard Lucille say just one word, "Disgusting!"

"I'm sorry, Mademoiselle Desmoulins," Betty Lee said, getting up from the curb as carefully as she could so as not to disturb the puppy. "I'm awfully sorry to do anything you do not like, but I can't let this poor fellow go. I just *can't*. It's his leg, you see. It's all cut. He couldn't walk.

He's hardly old enough to walk, anyway! Are you, you poor nobody's little lamb?" This last was whispered into the puppy's ear.

Mademoiselle Desmoulins might not have been so insistent if she had not known that the other governesses were gathered about, eager to see what she would do with the *jeune Américaine*. Mademoiselle Desmoulins did not fancy the idea of people thinking she could not manage young ladies, even an American young lady. "Put that dog down, Mademoiselle Gray. Put it down at once, or we shall have to leave you here alone."

Antoinette was whispering, "You had better do as Mademoiselle Desmoulins says. She is very angry, she is *very* angry. You had better drop the puppy."

The little Rastignacs were gazing at the puppy, wishing, no doubt, that they could stroke its head. The boys were snickering.

Betty Lee looked at them all, and the crowd gathered around her. No one seemed real, not even Mademoiselle Desmoulins, who was almost screaming. Nothing was real except the puppy snuggled in her arms. She waited until Mademoiselle Desmoulins had finished one of her loud sentences, and then said as quietly as she could—her heart was beating so fast that it was hard for

her to speak quietly—"I'm sorry, Mademoiselle Desmoulins. But if you will not let me bring the puppy, I'll have to walk home with it alone. It is hurt, you see. I cannot leave it here."

Several of the governesses tittered.

No doubt it was this that made Mademoiselle Desmoulins make up her mind. With a fierce wag of her head, she told the *nounous* to follow her, and walked off, dragging Antoinette after her.

Betty Lee and the puppy were left alone in the crowd. But no one seemed interested in her now that the Rastignacs had gone. She crossed the Pont Royal and found her way back to the Rue Saint-Dominique without any difficulty.

Peter was waiting for her on the sidewalk in front of the square white house. "When the news came," he told her, "I apologized for you. Everyone was in a high state of excitement, everyone, that is, except my friend the Count. He thought the whole thing extremely foolish. He did not wink at me exactly, but he wiggled his eyebrow, and I know he was thinking just what I was thinking, that Mademoiselle Desmoulins was a silly old thing. Wonderful man, Comte Albert Saint-Simon de Rastignac! I'm sorry for him, living, as he does, in a cage."

Needless to say, Peter fell in love with the puppy. On the way home they went to a veterinary to have its leg bandaged.

The question of a name for the young fellow occupied them until dinner time.

“He’s so little,” said Betty Lee.

“‘He’s mighty little and he’s mighty full o’ fleas, but he dun cum,’” quoted Peter, remembering Diddy Duncum’s arrival at Meadowlarks.

Betty Lee laughed and said she was glad to have a Paris addition for the Meadowlarks menagerie!

Peter screwed up his eyes and pretended to be very severe. “Is that creature, that gamin puppy, full of fleas, to be taken back to Virginia?”

She looked for the twinkle in her father’s eye, found it, of course, and replied, “Not if you do not want him.”

Peter smoked a pipe over the grave matter of choosing a name for the new arrival.

“He’s hardly a dog at all, Peter. He’s just a little something.”

“That’s it, Betty Lee! ‘Little Something’—‘*Peu de Chose*’! We’ll call him ‘Peu de Chose.’”

Little something or not, the cats on the window sill were not pleased by his arrival. They

ceased their purring and wagged their large fat tails. Then they slid off the window sill and went —goodness knows where Paris cats go when they slide off second-story window sills. But they returned for breakfast as usual. And Peu de Chose took up his life of ease as naturally as if he had not been one of the luckiest gamin pups in all Paris.

That evening Betty Lee and Peter took another disappointing stroll in the garden. Biblio was not to be found.

Betty Lee sat down by the open window, Peu de Chose in her lap, and wrote:

Where did he go, Prince Biblio,
With his face so very white?
Where did he go, Prince Biblio,
With his eyes as dark as night?
Where did he go, this Biblio,
With a wrinkle in his brow,
Doesn't he know, bad Biblio,
That we're waiting for him now?

CHAPTER XIII

Lemoine Has His Way

IN THE morning Marie, the ever-smiling Marie, brought three pitchers of hot milk, one for Betty Lee and her father, one for the black cats, and one for Peu de Chose, who felt very much refreshed after his sleep on Betty Lee's silk comforter, and was in a gay mood in spite of his bandaged leg.

But Betty Lee was not very cheerful. Neither was Peter. They were both worried about Biblio. "Something is wrong. I feel it in my bones," Betty Lee said.

Peter agreed. "He would have come to the garden if he could. I'm sure of it. Something serious must be the matter. Shall we go to the Quai des Grands Augustins this morning and find out what it is?"

She was ready to go in five minutes. "I can't leave Peu de Chose alone, Peter. He and the cats might have a quarrel. Do you think I can take him with me?"

Peter looked at Peu de Chose and burst out laughing. The tiny puppy, with his bandaged leg, was perched in the middle of the comforter which he thought belonged to him. "Peu de Chose, I do not mean to be rude," said Peter, "but I should like very much to know what kind of pup you are, if indeed you are pup at all. You might be a weasel, and you might be a very, very small brown bear."

Peu de Chose cocked his head on one side and tried his best to understand.

"Tell my father," said Betty Lee, gathering up the small scrap, "that you are just a little something now, but that some day you hope to be a Pomeranian."

Peu de Chose declined to have anything to do with the gentleman who asked questions. It was more pleasant to snuggle on the little lady's arm.

It was in this comfortable spot that Peu de Chose remained most of the time, for Betty Lee carried him everywhere. "I don't know what I shall do if he grows fat, Peter. He's only a little something, but he makes my arm feel as if it were full of pins."

Before they reached the Quai des Grands Augustins, Peu de Chose was nestling in a comfortable spot on Peter's arm.

It was very exciting climbing up these four long dark flights of stairs. Knocking at the door gave Betty Lee the shivers. "Something's wrong, Peter. I know it. I feel it. Something's wrong."

Something was wrong.

Instead of Père Léopard coming to the door and staring at them with his dull, tired eyes, a strange young man appeared, a young American in a velvet jacket. He told them his name was Jack Ferris, and he invited them into "his" studio. "I was lucky to get this place. Shouldn't have been able to do it if the old fellow who lived here had been able to pay his rent. Nice old chap! Felt deuced sorry for him. And the boy! The old fellow had a nice boy. It was rough on them, being turned out. I did the best I could. I asked Lemoine the——"

Betty Lee interrupted. "Père Léopard and Biblio turned out! Turned out!"

The young American said he was afraid that was it.

"Do you know where they went? Did they tell you what they were going to do? When did it happen?" Peter was as excited as Betty Lee. "They were friends of ours, very good friends of ours. If I had known, I would not have let this

happen for worlds! It is awful! Have you any idea where they went?"

Jack Ferris was very much upset. "Don't think that I'm the cause of it, will you? I happened to come up here one evening to look at the studio across the hall. The door to this one was open. I could not help hearing what was going on. Lemoine, I think that's the fellow's name, was preaching a sermon about rent and so forth. When he had gone, I talked to the old man. He said it would be all right, that the boy would sell his sketches in the morning. I came back the next evening and found the place empty. The old man and the boy and all the books were gone."

"Where did they go?" Betty Lee was in tears.

"Yes, where did they go?" Peter was wretched.

Jack Ferris knew nothing of Père Léopard and Biblio. "I wish I could be of some use," he said. "I asked the concierge if she knew where they had gone, but the woman was new. The other one, the one who had been here for so long, had been discharged. I've been in the studio a week now, and there has not been one word from the old man or the boy. But their books are in the cellar. Lemoine let them stay here until the old man could find some place to put them."²²

“Père Léopard’s ‘little cabbages’ in the cellar! Oh! Peter, isn’t it awful! What shall we do?” Tears had dropped on Peu de Chose, who, being a sensitive creature, knew well enough that his mistress, his lovely kind mistress, was in trouble. He did the best he could and licked her hand affectionately.

Betty Lee went to the window and looked out. “Biblio’s view!” she thought. “The most beautiful view in all the world! I wonder what he is doing without it.” She looked for the broken windowpane and saw that it had been mended for this new tenant.

Jack Ferris came over to Betty Lee and made friends with Peu de Chose. “I took the studio because of the view,” he said. “Lovely, isn’t it?”

She told him how much Biblio had liked the view.

“Golly,” said Jack Ferris. “Makes me feel uncomfortable.”

“It’s not your fault,” Peter assured him. “It’s the fault of that beast Lemoine.”

“I’d like to find Biblio,” said Betty Lee. “Peter, let’s hunt. Let’s walk through every street in the Quartier. Let’s find him, no matter what happens.”

Jack Ferris said he would do all he could. "If I hear any news," he promised, "I shall come to tell you immediately. Where are you staying?"

Peter told him. On their way downstairs they met the new concierge. She was a sharp-faced woman with a harsh voice, and Peter knew, just by looking at her, how useless it would be to ask for news of Père Léopard and Biblio. But he thought the woman might know what had become of the old concierge.

"If you please, Madame," said Betty Lee, "my father and I are looking for an old man and a boy. They used to live in the attic studio. Can you tell me where they went?"

"Into the Seine, most likely," was the woman's reply.

"The old concierge? Do you happen to know where we can find her?" Peter asked.

The woman said she hoped Madame Gosse was dead.

"That," said Peter, when they came to the bottom of the stairs and turned onto the Quai, "is the way many concierges treat attic tenants."

Betty Lee was thinking of Père Léopard and Biblio. "You don't think they could be down there?" She pointed to the embankment under the Pont des Arts. "They couldn't be down

there, could they, Peter? Who are all those poor people, anyway?"

They leaned over the stone railing of the Quai and looked down at the water's edge. Peter pointed out different types. "That's a mattress mender, Betty Lee. Poor old soul, she drags the mattresses here in a small cart to lay them out on the cobblestones to take them apart and sew them up again when she has picked over the hair. That funny old man over there with the leather apron, he's a dog washer. He'd give Peu de Chose a bath for a franc or two. And those women hanging up clothes on the roof of that old barge, they're laundresses. They live there, and they use the Seine for their washtub."

Betty Lee shivered. "You don't think Père Léopard and Biblio are down there with those poor old things? They couldn't be, could they, Peter?"

"If they are, Biblio will do something about it, I am sure. But I hope the concierge won't let anything happen to Père Léopard's books. To a woman like that, an old book is nothing more than a hunk of coal."

The thought of the "little cabbages" at the mercy of the concierge made Betty Lee cry again. Fortunately, Peu de Chose wanted to



They leaned over the stone railing of the Quai

take a little walk just then, and this took Betty Lee's mind off Père Léopard's *choux*.

Peter suggested having lunch at the café on the Boul' Mich', where they had met the monocle man. "After lunch, dear, we can go to the three places Biblio likes so much. Maybe we can find him at one of them."

The monocle man was sitting at the table where he had been when he tried to buy the sketch which Biblio gave to Betty Lee. They took the table next to him and asked for news of Biblio. But the man shook his head and said he had not seen the gamin for several weeks. This was not encouraging. Then he screwed the monocle deep into the corner of his eye and said, "That boy has talent, real talent."

"Some day," said Peter, "he will be a great artist. It is a shame that he has to want for so much now."

"He is just a gamin." Here the monocle man shrugged his shoulders. "He may starve, but he will not die. Gamins never die."

This hurt Betty Lee. It was so cruel to say things like this with a hot dinner in front of you. She wondered if the monocle man had any heart.

Peter was thinking the same thing, but he was polite, thanked the man, and turned around to

Betty Lee. Peu de Chose enjoyed that lunch more than either of them.

They strolled down the Boul' Mich', back to the Quai des Grands Augustins and past Biblio's lodging house. There was the hope in both their hearts that he might come darting out of the grim entryway. But he did not, and they continued along the Quai Conti and out on to the lovely Pont des Arts, the bridge which Biblio had called "his." It was very still, very restful here, and no danger of Peu de Chose being run over, because the bridge was for foot passengers only. Betty Lee set him down on his three legs. It was amusing to watch him try to be stylish on a leash. Never in his short puppyhood had he walked, or rather wabbled, with a leash. He did very well considering his bandaged leg, and best of all he made Betty Lee laugh.

She and Peter stood with their arms on the railing gazing at the "bow" of the boat-shaped island and the wonderful Cathedral of Notre-Dame. "Ghosts, beautiful ghosts! Notre-Dame is surrounded by the ghosts of unhappy women, unhappy, beautiful women!" Then Peter told her of Mary, Queen of Scots, who walked down the Cathedral steps to go back to England to die on a scaffold, and Queen Marie Antoinette who left

the altar of Notre-Dame, where she had been to thank God for sending her a baby, to enter the Prison of the Temple, and the Empress Josephine who was crowned in the Cathedral and then banished into the solitude of Malmaison. "Don't you think it was strange, Betty Lee, that these women should have been so unusually beautiful?"

She said she would like to see their pictures. "And if I think they're really and truly beautiful, Peter, I'm going to write a poem about them, all three of them."

Next they went to the Rue de l'Abbaye, to a spot just a little north of the garden of the Church of Sainte-Germain-des-Prés, where by the vigil lights Biblio had changed the sketch he bought from the "walking shop." "Just here," said Peter, "was an old prison where more than three hundred men and women were massacred during the Reign of Terror."

"Just when was the Reign of Terror, Peter? I know it was during the Revolution, but I can't remember who made it terrible."

Peter described Robespierre in his "sky-blue coat and black breeches" as a "sea-green monster." "The Seine was red from the blood of his victims. But his own blood flowed with the rest—green blood, they called it."

"Ugh!" said Betty Lee. "Was he really like that, really just horrible?"

"He did one good thing. He had benches put in all the parks."

"Why did the mob—that is what you call it, isn't it?—kill Robespierre?"

Peter said that it was because he had sent Danton to the guillotine. "Paris never forgave Robespierre. Danton was its idol."

"The guillotine! Ugh! that awful machine that beheaded people. I do not see why there have to be such things. Come on. I am tired of history. Let's go to the garden. Maybe Biblio will be there."

"I had hoped we might find him here," said Peter. "This was one of the places he wanted you to see, one of his favorite places." But in his heart Peter did not believe that they would find Biblio. Peter felt sure that poor little Biblio was in trouble.

Betty Lee and her father went to the Place de l'Observatoire. They looked through the gardens at the sky—on fire it seemed to be, and blown into twenty shades of red by a wind that rustled the treetops of the garden. "I understand why Biblio loves this place at sunset. I think it is one of the most beautiful sights I ever saw," said Peter.

Peu de Chose was getting restless, so Betty Lee suggested taking him into the garden. "He likes to feel the soft grass on his paddies."

"So do I. I'm exhausted," said Peter.

They went into the garden and asked the sail-boat man and the Guignol woman for news of Biblio, but neither of them had seen him for two weeks. Hoping perhaps that he *might* come, they waited under the bent sycamore until dark.

Biblio did not come.

CHAPTER XIV

In the Cellar

TOLBIAC had come to the rescue. He had given Biblio and Père Léopard a room under the Café Voltaire and said, "I will take a sketch a day for rent. Your food you can pay for as best you can." Tolbiac was a clever man in his slow, fat way, and although he did not care a fig about art, he knew a good sketch when he saw one. He had not lived in the Quartier for nothing, and could tell a real artist from the flippant "student" who lives there for no other reason than to amuse himself and do as he likes. "Some day," Tolbiac had thought at times, "the boy will be well known. Some day his sketches will bring money. Besides, he is a good gamin and I like him."

Biblio had been grateful to Tolbiac and made Père Léopard as comfortable as possible in that grim cellar room, which was blacker even than the street of The Cat who Fishes. Biblio had made the best of it, but Père Léopard was ill.

The shock of being turned out of the studio, the fear of something happening to his *choux*, had been too much for the old man. For days he had lain in a pitiful condition, his hands trembling so that he could not hold a pen, and his mind too upset to think of anything but his "little cabbages." Everything fell upon Biblio. He had to make sketches for Tolbiac to pay for the cellar room, and he had to make sketches to be sold in the Café Voltaire. Biblio had to sell here because he did not dare to leave Père Léopard for long. If no one bought in the Café Voltaire, Biblio and Père Léopard had no food, except that there was one happy exception—when Madame Gosse came with scraps.

Dear, faithful Madame Gosse, turned out of the lodging house by Lemoine because of her love for the "attic fools," dear faithful Madame Gosse had taken a position as waitress in a nearby restaurant. The scraps she brought were life-savers. Madame Gosse was a shrewd woman and had taken care to select a restaurant frequented by Americans who were sure to order plentifully and leave much on their plates.

"*Mes petits choux*," Père Léopard had cried all day and sometimes all night. "My little cabbages. Biblio, can't you bring me my little cabbages?"

Biblio could not endure this, and he ran for Madame Gosse. "Come and stay with him, won't you? I must go and get the books. I think he will die unless he has his books."

Madame Gosse closed one eye and pressed her round, dirty thumb against her lips, which meant that she would sneak off and go to Père Léopard.

Biblio began the heavy task of carrying the books from the Quai des Grands Augustins to the cellar of the Café Voltaire.

The first trip he brought ten or twelve of the most beloved, and when he put them into Père Léopard's arms, the old man wept. These happy tears and the delight of petting the little cabbages helped Père Léopard to get well. Every afternoon Madame Gosse came to stay with him while Biblio carried the precious cure. Biblio's arms and back ached from the heavy loads, but his heart was glad. Each time he gave ten or twelve *choux* to Père Léopard, Biblio would be happy enough to sit down and make a sketch for Tolbiac, and perhaps another to sell in the café to pay for a *pâté* and some coffee.

There was no time during these days for Biblio to think of his garden or Betty Lee and her father in the enchanted corner. Sometimes at night, when all his work was finished, Biblio would lie

a few minutes and wonder if Peter and Betty Lee were still in Paris, but his eyes would be too heavy to stay open long, and in the morning there would be no time for daydreaming. There were sketches and sketches and more sketches to be made, and books and books and more books to be carried.

Peter and Betty Lee might have found Biblio and *Père Léopard* much sooner if the miserable concierge had told the truth. But she had lied to the young American when he asked for news, and said that she had not seen the boy and the tottering old fool since they left. The mean woman had seen Biblio each time that he came for books, and she had laughed as she watched him carry away armfuls heavy enough to strain the back of a strong man. She had no respect for attic tenants. She was on Lemoine's side and wanted nothing whatever to do with the beggars he had turned into the street.

But Lemoine and this woman, unpleasant though they are, cannot prevent wonderful things from happening to people like *Père Léopard* and Biblio and Peter and Betty Lee. Three weeks from the time they had separated in the Palace of Versailles, they found each other in the *Café Voltaire*.

Peter and Betty Lee and the completely recovered Peu de Chose came for dinner. Biblio came with his sketches. The reunion was joyous.

But Biblio was afraid Betty Lee and her father would feel they had to help if they knew the real state of affairs, so he told them nothing about being turned out by Lemoine. What he said was, "We have moved, you know. Tolbiac has given us a room for less, much less. Of course, there is no view. But it is convenient for me to be near where I sell my sketches."

Betty Lee looked at her father and saw that he did not mean to say that he knew what had happened. Besides, he was giving her little kicks under the table, so Betty Lee knew that he was afraid of embarrassing Biblio. She kept still. But she felt sorry, oh, so sorry for him. The wrinkle in his brow was so much deeper, and his face was whiter than ever before.

He refused to share their *potage*, although he said it was his favorite soup.

Betty Lee was disappointed. It was the kind that made her feel as if she were browsing in green grass, and she knew that Biblio needed something warm.

But he smiled and thanked them. "I'm sorry," he said. "I cannot leave Père Léopard long

enough to sit down with you. He has been very ill. I think it was the excitement of moving and the fear of something happening to his books."

They understood far better than Biblio imagined they did. "Are the 'little cabbages' safe, Biblio? Are they with Père Léopard in his new room?" Betty Lee asked.

Biblio smiled. How glad he was to be able to tell her that he had moved them all, every one of them, and that Père Léopard was growing stronger now that he had them.

Peter noticed the weary droop of Biblio's shoulders. "They live in some miserable hole, I'm sure of it," thought Peter, and wished that he could find out more without hurting Biblio's feelings. "Sure you won't change your mind and have a little soup? Ours would taste so much better if you shared it with us." Peter could not bear to see the blue look around his little friend's mouth.

But Biblio refused again, made a funny stiff little bow, and moved off to the next table to try to sell his sketch.

"Couldn't we buy the sketch?" she asked her father in English.

"It would hurt his feelings if you offered," Peter said. "He would think you were trying to

buy it from pity. It is best to wait. We can do something really worth while. I do not know just what, but it will be something, I promise you."

Peter and Betty Lee did not have to wait long for their opportunity to help Biblio.

He was standing beside one of the tables on the other side of the room, waiting for a man to make up his mind whether or not he wanted the sketch.

The man took rather a long time, and as Biblio waited, the room began to sway. Suddenly it turned black, and before he could catch hold of anything to steady himself, he fell to the floor.

Peter ran to him, picked him up in his arms, and carried him out of the room.

Betty Lee did not know what she was doing, and she squeezed Peu de Chose so tight that the poor little dog could scarcely breathe. She ran after her father.

Biblio was lying limp in his arms, and Peter was asking questions of Tolbiac. "The boy has fainted. Can you tell me where I can find his room?"

"Down those stairs! In the cellar," Tolbiac replied.

Betty Lee's heart gave a twinge. In the cellar!

Down those stairs! She looked at the stairs. They were just a black hole. She asked Tolbiac for a candle, but while he was gone to get it Peter disappeared with Biblio in his arms. She did not wait for the candle. She followed them. It was black as night, and she could see absolutely nothing, but she could hear Biblio's feet scraping against the wall as her father carried him.

"See if you can find the door," Peter told her, when they had come to the bottom. It never occurred to him that Betty Lee might not follow down the dark stairs. He was sure that she was there. "Feel all along the wall and try to find a door," he said.

Betty Lee groped her way. Luckily her hand struck against a knob. She turned it and held the door open for her father. There was scarcely any more light in the room than there had been in the hall, just one candle flickering beside Père Léopard's bed. The old man was dozing.

"Now see if you can find some water," Peter said to Betty Lee, and laid Biblio on what he supposed was the boy's bed. It was no more than a dilapidated couch.

Just then Tolbiac appeared and Peter sent him for the water.

The first thing Biblio said when he came to

was, "Please don't tell my friends. I am all right. Do not tell them." Then he looked up and saw Peter and Betty Lee standing over him, and Tolbiac and the servants and Père Léopard. For the first time since his illness, Père Léopard was on his feet. He was laying cool things across Biblio's forehead. Biblio was glad his old friend was strong enough to stand. He closed his eyes again. He was ashamed of being so weak. He wondered if he could get up, tried to lift his head, but something like a knife jabbed his forehead.

Then he heard Betty Lee say, "Please don't try to move. Please lie still. Please, Biblio."

If she wanted him to, he would lie still. He closed his eyes. If she wanted him to lie still, he would not move one tiny bit, he would lie just as still as possible and keep the knives from jabbing his forehead. He would lie very—very—still. He fell asleep and dreamed of a beautiful garden and a little girl coming from the treetops to tell him that she liked his sketches.

When he opened his eyes again he thought that it was morning. It was about midnight, but Betty Lee and her father were still there. The first thing he heard was Betty Lee asking, oh, so very softly, if he felt better and if the pain in his head had gone. He felt dreadfully weak, but he

managed to sit up and smile. "I feel fine, really fine. I am sorry I was such a baby."

Peter sat on the edge of his bed and put his arm around him. "You gave us a scare, young fellow, do you know it, and I want you to promise me that it will never happen again. Understand?"

Biblio smiled.

"I want you to let me do something for you. It is for you and for Père Léopard, but it is really for Betty Lee and me, because it would give us so much pleasure. We want you to let us move you across the street into a lovely room that opens out into a garden. While you were sleeping, we went to look at it. It was too dark, of course, to see the garden, but we could smell roses and hear the splash of a fountain. Both of us want you and Père Léopard to have that room for the sake of Père Léopard's great history and for the sake of your work. Neither of you will be able to accomplish anything if you live in this dark hole."

While Betty Lee listened to her father, her heart was jumping up and down. Père Léopard had dragged himself off the bed again now, and was standing beside her, holding onto the table. She reached out her hand to the old man to steady him.

Biblio did not answer Peter for a few minutes,

just looked up at Betty Lee and Père Léopard. The pains were jabbing his forehead again, and he felt too weak to go on pretending to be strong. "Thank you, Monsieur Gray, thank you with all my heart. I wish we could let you do this. I want to, I really do, but——"

"It will be only for a little while, Biblio," said Peter. "Before long you will be a great artist. I am sure of it. I believe in your work and I want you to have your chance."

"Peter is always doing things for writers and artists, Biblio. Really he is. He wants to do this for you, and I want you to let him," Betty Lee pleaded.

"Is it because you believe in my work, Monsieur Gray, is that it? Do you think I shall be able to pay you back?" Biblio reached out his hand to Peter. "Do you really believe in me?"

"More than in any young man I know," Peter answered.

"Very well," said Biblio, and looked at them with an expression in his dark eyes that neither of them would forget.

Père Léopard was sniffling and fumbling about in his very wrinkled whatever it was that he had on, for a handkerchief. Betty Lee gave him hers, but the moment of tears did not last long, because

Peu de Chose, who had been rolled up on Père Léopard's blanket, had a nightmare and fell off the bed with a thud.

Everyone laughed and felt much better.

Promising to come and help with the moving, Betty Lee and Peter said good-night and felt their way up the black stairs and hurried home through the silent streets, where the only things stirring were cats and an occasional taxi.

The iron gates in front of the pension were closed. Everyone was in bed. They had to ring the bell and ring and keep on ringing until Mademoiselle Rabot raised the window, threw open the shutter, and looked out to see who it was.

Betty Lee fell asleep thinking of the basket of goodies she meant to take to Père Léopard and Biblio. It was to be the kind of basket that Aunt Jolly would have packed if she had been in Paris. "I'll take strawberries and cakes and cookies and jams and . . ." Betty Lee dreamed of that box and of a garden where there lived a young prince with dark eyes and a wrinkle in his brow, a wrinkle that grew deeper and deeper because he spent his days and nights working hard so that everyone in the garden might have plenty to eat and plenty of beautiful things to look at to keep them happy.

CHAPTER XV

Through the Woods to Sylvie's House

BIBLIO did not open his eyes until late the next morning, and he would not have waked then if it had not been for the human “alarm clock,” that very nearly dull and very nearly starved individual who, for a few sous, goes thumping on the doors of sleepy artists. The one across the street must have been very soundly asleep, for the “alarm clock” had to thump and bang and beat upon the door. It was this that aroused Biblio. He opened his eyes and saw a *café* servant carrying up Père Léopard’s books. The old man was sitting on the edge of his bed smiling and telling the servant just how many books to carry at one time, and how to carry them. Biblio sat up and rubbed his eyes. He was not sure what had happened the night before—whether he had toppled over on the *café* floor or not, so he asked Père Léopard. But the old man was too excited about his books to pay any attention to Biblio’s question.

"Thought you'd never wake up! We're being moved across the street. Are you strong enough to help with the books? That waiter is carrying them as if they were dust pans and mops. Better hurry. Your friends may come any minute."

Biblio was trying to straighten out his rumpled *culottes*. They had been wrinkled before he had slept in them. Now they were more like bags than breeches.

Someone was coming down the stairs, and Biblio thought it might be Betty Lee and her father. Never in his life had he brushed his hair or tied his tie with such speed; but it was not Betty Lee and her father. It was the monocle man coming to ask Biblio why he had not brought him any sketches.

"I have been giving all my work to Tolbiac," Biblio explained. "He is taking it in payment for rent."

The monocle man looked at the cellar and sniffed. "He's not paying you much. I heard you were living in a cellar. Thought I'd drop in to see how you were getting along. Better bring your things to me."

"I'll bring you a sketch very soon," Biblio promised. "The best one that I can do."

The monocle man shrugged his shoulders and

said, "You don't have to, you know. I only thought you might be starving. Even a gamin must eat."

"GAMIN!" Père Léopard roared. He was furious. Biblio, a gamin. "He is no gamin. He is an aristocrat, every inch of him." Père Léopard turned his back on the monocle man and shuffled off to his side of the room.

Biblio had to laugh. "Do not be angry with him. He is a friend of mine. He has been very kind."

"Friend!" Père Léopard snorted. He knew the Quartier types, and where Biblio was concerned the old man's instinct was strong.

The monocle man was whirling his third eye on the end of a black silk cord. After a moment he again shrugged his shoulders and turned to the door. "If you change your mind, you will find me as usual on the Boul' Mich', you know." With this, he went away.

It was really a wonderful morning for Biblio and Père Léopard. They were in their new room by noon. Such a pleasant room it was! The four walls of the court onto which it opened were covered with vines. In the center, surrounded by pink and white geraniums, a fountain splashed cheerfully. Sunlight poured into the court, and

there were crowds of sparrows. Père Léopard regretted the presence of the birds. "Noisy little pests," he called them.

But Biblio loved the sparrows. He made them a promise in his heart to share his *petit pain* with them. He meant to have plenty of *petit pain*, now, for he was determined to do wonderful work. Peter and Betty Lee believed in him, believed in him enough to get him this wonderful room! They believed he would be a great artist.

It took most of the morning to arrange the "little cabbages." They had to be piled just so. Had they not been piled like this for fifty years or more? Père Léopard was standing in the midst of his disorderly darlings, and Biblio was doing his best to stack them as they should be stacked, when Betty Lee and her father arrived with the very large basket of goodies. Peu de Chose came, too, of course. He was never much farther from Betty Lee than the end of her shadow.

"Let's help," said Peter, and went down on his hands and knees among the books.

Betty Lee handed Peu de Chose to Père Léopard so that she, too, could help put the "little cabbages" in place. Of course, anyone who did not understand what "in place" meant would not think the arrangement an orderly one. It was

nothing more or less than a number of piles stacked, not according to size, but according to meaning. Often the book Père Léopard wanted on top of the pile was a large book, while the one he wanted on the bottom was very small. Any stack might topple over at any moment.

“We hoped you might come with us to Chantilly, Biblio,” said Peter, trying to place a large tome on the top of a wobbly stack. “It’s such a beautiful day. The country air would do you good. Perhaps Père Léopard would come, too.”

“Oh, please, Biblio. Please, Père Léopard. I’ll promise you there won’t be any Hester Meggses in Chantilly. Please come.” Much to the old man’s relief, she was taking the puppy out of his lap.

Biblio’s eyes had a look in them that made Peter want to bundle him up and run off with him to some place where he would never have to work again.

But there was no such idea in Biblio’s head. “I’m sorry, Monsieur Gray, very sorry, Bettee-lée, but when I have finished my sketches I am going to help Père Léopard with his history. I am going to write it for him. He will tell me what to say and I shall put it down. I am afraid I cannot go to Chantilly.”



*Betty Lee and her father arrived with the basket
of goodies*

"No," said Père Léopard. "I need him to-day and every other day until my book is finished. See?" He showed them his trembling fingers. "I cannot hold my pen. If it were not for the boy, my great history might never be finished, never." The man's tired eyes were misty.

"Poor old grizzly darling," thought Betty Lee. But she was thinking of Biblio, too. He was so white, and the wrinkle was deep.

Biblio was afraid that she and her father would think he was not anxious to help Père Léopard, and at the same time he wanted them to know how much he longed to go with them. "Of all the places for a picnic, the Forest of Chantilly is the best. I should love to go if I did not want to stay to help Père Léopard. The history must be finished. The publishers have been waiting a long while. We are going to work together on it until the book *is* finished. If it were not for you, Monsieur Gray, and this lovely room, we couldn't work at all. The cellar was too dark. Oh, I wish I could thank you for all that you have done. I wish——"

Peter stopped him. "I do not want you to thank me. It is enough that you should become a great artist and that Père Léopard finish his history. Please do not talk any more of the room.

It will spoil our fun if you keep on saying, 'Thanks.'"

Biblio smiled and peeked into the large basket. "Just the same, everything you have done, everything, has been wonderful." His lips trembled a little over the word "everything." At that moment the desire to be a great artist burned in him like fever. He made a promise in his heart that, no matter what happened, he would live up to all that Peter and Betty Lee believed of him. "I shall never forget, Monsieur Gray, never." Then he turned to Betty Lee and said, "I'm sorry I was such a weakling last night, Betteelée — awfully sorry."

"You were no weakling," she answered. "You could not be even if you wanted to. You were worn out, that's all. I wish you could come with us to-day."

Biblio shook his head. "It's wonderful here in this room. And I am glad to stay with Père Léopard. I shall stay with him until the book is finished."

Biblio stood on the top steps and watched Betty Lee and Peter until they were out of sight. He wondered if they knew how hard it had been for him to refuse to go with them.

They went alone to Chantilly, and because Peter knew the way of gatekeepers and their families in the Forest of Chantilly, he bought a half-dozen goose-liver *pâtés*. "I shall give these to them," he explained to Betty Lee, "and they will be delighted. They love *pâtés* from Paris because they get them so seldom. In exchange they will make us coffee and a wonderful omelet."

They did not go into the Château because it was crowded with tourists, but Peter told Betty Lee of the cook who had killed himself there because the fish that he meant to serve to Louis the Fourteenth was late. They stopped to feed the carp, of course. Of all the visitors at Chantilly, Peter and Betty Lee would be least likely to overlook the hundred-year-old fish who swim so leisurely in the still green water of the lake and seem to be wise, all wise about the happenings of the Château.

"Let's not ask the fish or anyone else about the history of the Château," said Peter. "Let's go into the Forest, exchange our *pâtés* for omelet and coffee, and then lie down somewhere in the cool grass and do nothing at all."

"I'd just love that! So would Peu de Chose,"

said Betty Lee. "If there is anything Peu de Chose and I love it is to feel soft, cool green grass."

"Perhaps," said Peter, "you could take off your shoes and stockings and wade a little. I think I can find a spot, an end-of-the-world spot, where no one would see, or mind if they did see."

They exchanged the goose-liver *pâtes* for omelet and coffee, and left a very contented gate-keeper family. Peu de Chose feasted, too, on a most refreshing stale bone. Then they found the end-of-the-world spot, and they both went wading. Peu de Chose barked loudly while this was going on. To him it seemed a most silly performance.

"Doesn't it smell good?" said Betty Lee, stretching out beside her father, who was already full length on a moss bank, smoking his pipe.

Peter was so comfortable that he just grunted. But after a few minutes he asked her what it was that made this end-of-the-world spot smell as it did.

She took a long sniff. "I think it's hay and sunlight and clover and roses and something else. I don't know the something else."

"Just the Chantilly smell," said Peter. "The

carp could tell us, no doubt, but I'm sure they won't."

Peu de Chose liked the odor, too. It smelled to him of mice and rabbits.

"Once upon a time," began Peter sleepily, "there lived a beautiful young woman." He pointed over his shoulder. "See the peak of the little house, a tiny gray peak?"

She saw the peak.

"Well, in that house there lived a beautiful young woman. Or rather there came to that house"—Peter was really too sleepy to tell a story but he wanted Betty Lee to know about the Maison de Sylvie, or the little house that belonged to a beautiful woman named Sylvie—"there came to that house," continued Peter, taking his pipe out of his mouth and giving a tremendous yawn, "two young people whom all the world had tried to separate. But they loved each other very dearly and hid here in this forest, in that little house with the blue-gray roof. And they were very, very happy, so happy that their spirits hover in the shadows and make them beautiful. They are, don't you think, the most purple shadows you ever saw? That purple was the color of the young woman's eyes. Well, they hid away here and lived like story-book people

until one day the young man rode off on his horse and never came back. He was shot by some hunters by mistake. It's because they feel bad on his account that the birds sing here the way they do."

Betty Lee listened. There did seem to be something unusually beautiful and sad in the way the birds were singing. "What happened to the beautiful young woman, Peter?"

Peter did not know, and Betty Lee lay still, thinking about the little house and the two young people. "They must have been very happy," she thought. "What a beautiful place to hide." Then the rhymes got her and she wrote:

To Sylvie's house we came and found
Deep shadows creeping, creeping;
In Sylvie's house the only sound
Is Sylvie weeping, weeping.

She was just wondering what else to say when someone came down the path.

"Whoo-hoo! Whoo-hoo! Monsieur Gray! Bet-teelée!" It was Biblio, running as fast as he could. The large basket of goodies Betty Lee had brought him in the morning was swinging over his arm. "Whoo-hoo!" Just then he caught sight of them.

It was certainly a happy moment. "But we thought——" Betty Lee started to say.

Biblio explained. "After you had gone, Père Léopard looked at me in such a funny way. His wonderful eyebrow was all twisted and he was making a face. 'I think,' he said, 'that I'll take one day's rest. We can begin work to-morrow. Run after your friends and go with them to the country.' Wasn't it wonderful of him! I ran as hard as I could, took the next train, and here I am! When I saw the crowd at the Château, I knew you would not be there, so I came into the Forest."

"But how on earth did you know which paths to take? There are at least a million." Peter had let his pipe go out in the excitement of seeing Biblio.

"I knew about the Maison de Sylvie," he told them. "I was very sure that you would come here. So I came, yelling like a crazy person."

He told his friends about having received a call that morning from the monocle man. "I promised that I would bring him a sketch soon. I think I will do one for him of this spot." Then Biblio perched on a clump of moss and made a sketch of the wading pond near the Maison de Sylvie in that wonderful end-of-the-world spot where he had found Peter and Betty Lee.

While he made his sketch Betty Lee finished her poem.

To Sylvie's house we came and found
Deep shadows creeping, creeping;
In Sylvie's house the only sound
Is Sylvie weeping, weeping;
Round Sylvie's house the forest high
A silent watch is keeping,
Lest very noisy you and I
Keep Sylvie's ghost from sleeping.

That picnic day at Chantilly was one of the happiest that Betty Lee and Peter spent in France. But there were to be no more picnics like it for a long, long while. Neither Peter nor Betty Lee could drag Biblio away from his work. All day and many times late into the night, so Peter suspected, he sat beside the feeble old bookworm, writing down sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, page after page, chapter after chapter. Again and again Peter and Betty Lee stopped by in the hope of taking both of them for a breath of air in the Bois, or a stroll in the garden where the leaves were beginning to turn brown in the still, dry August heat. But each time they called both Biblio and the old man shook their heads and refused to stir from the desk.

"Anyway, I'm glad they have that lovely room," she would say, and hardly a day went by that she did not think of some specially tempting thing to take them.

"I'm glad about the room, too," said Peter. "I know they miss the view from the old studio, but I think this place is really more comfortable for them. At any rate, Biblio does not have to run up and down four long dark flights of stairs to bring the old man's food, or to go out with his sketches. That's some consolation."

"He told me yesterday, Peter, that when he doesn't have time to go out he sits at the window and sketches the court. He loves the fountain and the old walls and all the sparrows."

"Those sketches will be valuable some day, Betty Lee. Biblio is doing excellent work. He feels that he owes it to me to be a real artist all of a sudden. Poor little chap!"

"No matter how great he becomes," said Betty Lee, "I shall like the sketch he gave me more than anything he does."

CHAPTER XVI

The Monocle Man's Treachery

AFTER the excitement Betty Lee had caused, she and her father thought it best not to go to the Rastignacs' again without a special invitation. But no invitation came for two months, not until the Rastignacs returned to Paris from their country place.

Although Peter and Betty Lee saw little of Biblio and nothing at all of the Rastignacs, they were not lonely. They did so many things together, these two. Not even the warm summer days in Paris were long enough.

They took trips into the lovely country districts lying just outside of Paris. They went to the Bois and rode in the boats, fed the ducks, had pink or yellow or pale green *glaces* (ice cream) at a *café* on an island in one of the lakes. They discovered a riding school near the entrance of the Bois, and selected two calico horses with soft eyes like Stonewall Jackson's. They rode in



N. BARNHART.

The days in Paris were not long enough

the late afternoons when the breeze began to rise from the valley of the Seine and the stars to open their eyes and blink through the tall trees. They did not neglect the goldfish nor Biblio's friends the sailboat man, the Guignol woman, and Madame Trèfle, but took each one for a ride in the Bois—something which the Guignol woman had done but once, and that was twenty years ago, in her wedding veil, after her marriage in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. There was never a day that they did not spend at least an hour in their corner of the garden under the sycamore. Nor was this time wasted. Peter and Betty Lee amused themselves by making a poetic map of the Quartier. They called the map Biblio's Beautiful Kingdom.

Then one day came a stiff note from Madame la Comtesse saying that it would give the Count and herself a great deal of pleasure if Monsieur Gray and his daughter would come to the "informal" reunion on Sunday afternoon at three-thirty (just as if anything could be informal in that great square white house). They had just returned to Paris, Madame la Comtesse wrote, and they hoped to have this opportunity to renew the acquaintance. Monsieur le Comte Albert Saint-Simon de Rastignac de Périgueux de Dor-

dogne was especially anxious to see his old friend, his very dear friend, Monsieur Gray.

Betty Lee and Peter laughed over the "de" this and the "de" that, but Peter told Betty Lee that the very old family of Rastignac had come originally from the city of Périgueux in the department called Dordogne. "Their old estate there is beautiful, one of the most beautiful I have ever seen in France."

"It may be beautiful," said Betty Lee, "but I am sure they are not so happy there as we are at Meadowlarks—dear old Meadowlarks." She could not discover what the mysterious something was which all the Rastignacs seemed to fear. Betty Lee felt very sure that it must be dark and big, a little spooky, perhaps, and thinking about it made her own Meadowlarks seem dearer than ever to her. "I should like to go to the reunion or party or whatever it is. Do you want to go, Peter?"

Peter said that he thought he would stay home and take care of Peu de Chose. "He and I shall escort you to the door, dear, and come back for you at the right moment. But Peu de Chose whispers to me that he thinks he had better not go in." Peter was teaching the little brown fellow, now in possession of a beautiful soft brown coat,

to cock his head on one side and listen while he was being spoken to, even if he did not understand.

It was decided that Peter should take care of Peu de Chose while Betty Lee went to the party. She began to make up her mind which of Aunt Jolly's lovely hand-made frocks she should wear to the Sunday afternoon reunion at the great square white house of the Rastignacs. She decided on a crêpe de Chine with endless teeny-weeny tucks, and the softest of accordion-pleated flounces that floated, she thought, like a butterfly's wing. "It's a pretty color, isn't it, Peter? But I don't know whether it's pink or yellow."

Peter said it was the prettiest color he had ever seen, and he smiled to himself because he knew very well that with the exception of his friend the Count, and possibly Antoinette, none of the Rastignacs would approve of Betty Lee's exquisite frock. But he said nothing. Not for all the Rastignacs would he have had her any less like a butterfly in front of a puff of wind. He stroked the back of Peu de Chose. "She belongs in a garden. If the Rastignacs' home is not a garden, it is not her fault. And I have an idea, when my friend the Count sees her, he may let his little Antoinette have a few pretty things." All this was going through Peter's mind.

Betty Lee was wishing that she might take Antoinette a present. She asked Peter what he thought about it, and he said it would be fun to take them all a large box of bonbons.

Driving up to the Rastignacs' front door on that very special Sunday afternoon was most exciting. Betty Lee held the box of bonbons very tight and whispered to Peter as the dear old butler began fumbling at the heavy door, "Don't be late. I may be frightened. Come for me ahead of time, and if you see Biblio, tell him we'll be in the garden to-morrow afternoon. Tell him——"

The door swung open, and she did not finish her sentence.

Peter held *Peu de Chose* as he watched Betty Lee disappear into the house. He was wishing that Biblio could see her in the pale-yellow-pale-pink dress. "He would appreciate how beautiful she is, wouldn't he, *Peu de Chose*?" This Peter murmured into the small brown ear as he turned away from the great house.

Mademoiselle Desmoulins had dreaded Betty Lee's coming, and Lucille had quarreled with Antoinette. "I think she's a common dressed-up thing," was what Lucille had said. "I don't see why Father lets her come here."

This had made Antoinette angry. "Father

likes them, and so do I. I think she is as sweet as anyone we know, and much, much prettier. I like her a great deal. I wish I could see her all the time."

After this conversation, the sisters had not spoken for several days.

The Rastignac boys had agreed about Betty Lee. They liked to look at her, but they did not think she should be playing with their sisters. And the little children thought nothing about her at all except that she had saved a puppy and that they would have liked very much to pat that puppy.

The *nounous* liked Betty Lee because she spoke to them so pleasantly, and Madame la Comtesse, who had expected Betty Lee to be boisterous, found her as well-mannered as any aristocratic French girl.

No one in the house of Rastignac was to forget Betty Lee and her father, least of all, Antoinette.

The party did not seem to Betty Lee like a party at all. First of all, everyone sat down in a circle and spoke very softly.

"Sit next to me," Antoinette whispered. "I will give you my *gâteaux*" (cakes).

Betty Lee tucked her hand into Antoinette's when no one was looking. They were close to-

gether on small chairs between large ladies with full black dresses. "My aunts," Antoinette whispered, and rolled her black eyes toward the large ladies.

The other Rastignac children and any number of cousins, all exactly like the Rastignacs, were on the other side of the room. Betty Lee felt they were whispering about her.

"Your sister doesn't like me, does she, Antoinette? Why is it?"

"Sh!" said Antoinette. "Someone might hear." Then she leaned close to Betty Lee and said, "It's because you're different, you see. You're not one of us. But I like you. I like you more than any of my cousins."

"I like you, too," Betty Lee whispered back. And she was going to tell Antoinette that she would love to have her see Meadowlarks, but one of the large ladies was looking down disapprovingly. So Betty Lee just held Antoinette's hand and said nothing.

They ate the *gâteaux*, which really were not cakes at all, but dry, sweet crackers. Then, after a while, Mademoiselle Desmoulins and all the other governesses took the girls into the drawing room for "a little piano."

"We go into the garden to walk afterward," Antoinette whispered.

All the mothers came into the drawing room and sat around while the girls danced with each other. The boys had gone somewhere else. No one danced with Betty Lee except Antoinette. Afterward they went into the garden. But it was dreary here, too. The boys whispered together in one corner and the girls walked up and down the paths in couples. Betty Lee did not mind very much, because the place was filled with roses and singing birds, and all the while Antoinette held her hand.

Just the same, when it was time to go home, Betty Lee was very glad. "Antoinette is one of the sweetest girls I know," she told Peter, "and I believe she's unhappy in that great shut-up prison! I wish we could steal her away and take her back to Meadowlarks."

"If we did," said Peter, "the Rastignacs would have us shut up in a nice dungeon! Little Antoinette will be all right. She's like her father. She'll get some fun out of life in spite of her family."

Betty Lee said she hoped so. "You know, Peter, I feel as if I hadn't breathed for several

hours. Couldn't we go somewhere to see the sunset and take some good long breaths of fresh air?"

He suggested the Bois, and they went to drive through the cool avenues of lovely old trees whose trunks were as green as their leaves. They did not ride in a taxi, but in an old-fashioned victoria, drawn by a horse that they thought looked like one of Swan's mules. It was great fun jogging along in the comfortable old carriage. The cloth on the seats smelled of the stables. This interested Peu de Chose. He liked it so much that he licked the seat and kept on licking it, although Betty Lee explained to him that the *cocher*, or coachman, might not like to have his victoria licked by a small brown dog. It was interesting to see all the poor people of Paris sprawling about on the green grass under the tall trees. There were such crowds of children, and young people on bicycles with colored paper lanterns swinging on the handle bars, to be lighted after dark by a tiny candle that would flicker in the breeze.

"Do you know, Peter," said Betty Lee, "I think these people have ten times as much fun as the Rastignacs."

All the way home they were talking of An-



Through the Bois in an old-fashioned victoria

toinette. Betty Lee was telling Peter how much she would like Antoinette to have some of their good times, when they saw something which took their breath away.

In the window of one of the best known art shops of the fashionable Rue Saint-Honoré, right in the front of the window, was Biblio's sketch of the pond near the Maison de Sylvie at Chantilly!

It was Sunday, and of course the store was closed, but Betty Lee and Peter hurried out of the victoria to look at the sketch.

"It is, Peter, it's Biblio's! It's the one he did with us on the picnic! And look at the price they've put on it! Look—two hundred francs! Why, that's twenty times what the monocle man gives him." Betty Lee was in a high state of excitement.

Peter was looking at the sketch as closely as he could through the window. He wanted to be sure that it was really the one Biblio had done. "There's no mistaking it, Betty Lee. It's his, the very one! I wonder—" Peter did not finish the sentence but began looking around in the hope of seeing the owner of the shop. But there was no one in the street who looked as if he had anything to do with the place. "We'll come back

in the morning the very first thing," he said. "I will have a talk with the dealer and find out from whom he bought that sketch. I have an idea it came from the monocle man. I believe he has been buying Biblio's things for a miserable ten francs and selling them over here for a hundred or a hundred and fifty." Peter told the *cocher* to drive them home. "We won't say a word to Biblio until after we have talked with the art dealer. Then we'll have a piece of news for him that will make him happy the rest of his life every time he thinks about it!"

The cats and the pigeons did not receive their usual amount of attention the next morning, because Betty Lee and Peter were in a great hurry. They were waiting on the doorstep of the art store before the owner himself arrived.

"Good-morning," Peter began. "My daughter and I like that charcoal drawing. Chantilly, isn't it? Clever artist, whoever he is. Do you know him?"

The art dealer shook his head. "It's very good. You're right. But I do not know the name of the artist. His things are brought to me by a man from the Quartier, a good judge of charcoal sketching. He says the artist is just a boy, a gamin without a name. The boy has the knack

of doing what people like. I sell everything of his that this man brings me, and I could sell more if I knew where to lay my hands on them."

Peter, no less excited than Betty Lee, told the dealer that he knew the boy very well. "Shall I bring him to see you?"

The dealer said that he was eager to meet Biblio. "I have wanted to find this boy for a long time, but every time I have asked that he be brought here, there has been some excuse."

"The reason," said Peter, "is that your friend pays this boy a miserable ten francs for his sketches."

"Ten francs! Are you sure? Why, I have been paying a hundred right along. And for this one, for this one, I paid one hundred and fifty!" The dealer was in a rage.

"From now on," said Peter, "you and the boy can deal directly. You will like him. He is one of the finest boys I know. And what is more, I believe he will be a great artist!"

Peter and Betty Lee left him bowing his gratitude to them and wishing all manner of evil on the monocle man. They lost no time in taking the news to Biblio. They found him sitting beside Père Léopard, writing as usual.

"Do you think I should keep my sketch of

the garden?" Betty Lee asked. "The money would mean so much to Biblio, so much."

"You would hurt his feelings if you suggested giving it back to him."

"I know, but I hate to be mean. I hate keeping anything from him when he needs so much, so *very* much."

It was Betty Lee who told Biblio. She almost dropped Peu de Chose in her excitement of pushing open the door. Peter, very much out of breath from running up the stairs, arrived just in time to hear her say, "Biblio, BIBLIO! Your sketch of the *maison de Sylvie* is for sale in a big art shop on the Rue Saint-Honoré. We've been talking with the dealer. He has been buying everything you sold to that horrid old monocle man and selling them for a hundred francs a piece!" All this she poured out with one breath, and without thinking very much what she was doing she set Peu de Chose right in the midst of Père Léopard's precious manuscript. But nobody noticed.

Biblio felt giddy. He did not take in what Betty Lee said. "You mean my sketch—the one I did for my friend?"

"Friend!" sniffed Père Léopard, exactly as he had done the other morning. "Didn't I tell you

that three-eyed fellow was no friend of yours? Didn't I tell you?"

"Père Léopard is right," said Peter, and explained quietly exactly what had happened. He ended by putting his arm on Biblio's shoulder and saying, "I knew all along that this would happen. I told you your work was good. I knew from the first moment that I saw you lying there in the corner of the garden. When I saw your work, I was sure. Now I'm beginning to think it's time you called yourself Biblio Léopard."

"Not until I have done something really worth while," said Biblio.

"*Mille tonnerres!*" (Père Léopard never said "a thousand thunders" unless he was greatly provoked.) "Has he not already been Biblio Léopard? Must we fight this old fight all over again?"

But Biblio replied calmly, just as he had replied many times in the years that he had lived with his dear old bookworm, that he would not take the name of Léopard until he was a great artist.

Peter, fearing that an argument might arise and spoil the effect of the good news, suggested that they have a celebration. "Come on, Père Léopard. An outing will do you both good. It has been two months since either of you stirred.

Come along, Biblio! Let's declare a holiday and go to Fontainebleau and Barbizon!"

Père Léopard screwed up his eye under its shaggy brow and said, "Biblio may go with you, but I shall stay here to rest. It will make me happy to think of him in Barbizon."

"Hurrah!" said Peter, and tossed his hat in the air. "Hurrah! Fontainebleau and Barbizon to-morrow!"

Peu de Chose was lifted down from Père Léopard's table and chased around the room in a delightful game of tag. He was glad, too, because sitting on top of all that paper had been rather dull. "To—mor—row! To—mor—row! you little brown frog, you'll be scampering in the forest," sang Betty Lee as she scuttled her puppy under Père Léopard's chair. "To—mor—row, to—mor—row! We're going to the woods, and maybe there'll be a bunny or two." Then a little rhyme got her and she sang to Peu de Chose:

"A bunny or two and a big dark wood,
Away from the busy city.
A nice brown bunny, if you'll be good,
And maybe a large wood-kitty."

Fortunately there were to be no wood-kitties, but bunnies? Well, perhaps.

CHAPTER XVII

What a Day It Was

BIBLIO could not sleep that night. Two exciting thoughts kept him awake—his sketch for sale in the Rue Saint-Honoré for 200 francs, and the trip to Barbizon in the morning. For almost two months Biblio had been a prisoner. If he had been fettered with ball and chain he could not have been more bound. Not once during that time had he left Père Léopard's side except to go and bring the coffee and the *pâtes*. Not once did he walk to one of his favorite haunts. Many of the sketches he had made had been of the court beneath the window, and many others he had done from memory. Not once did he accept any invitation from Betty Lee and Peter. Not once did he go into the garden. So badly had he wanted to go that he had not been able to let himself think about it at all. All he had allowed himself to think about was the work he was doing for Père Léopard. For weeks and weeks there had been nothing but sitting very

still beside the old bookworm, writing down sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph.

Often Biblio had dragged himself out of bed (a real bed it was now, thanks to Peter) to begin to sketch before the cock next door considered it time to crow. A lonely old woman kept this barnyard fellow on a balcony window just as if it had been a parrot or a canary. Biblio had made friends with this creature, but Père Léopard was unable to bear the sound of its voice. By getting up before dawn this way, Biblio had been able to make sketches before it was time to go for Père Léopard's breakfast. Those days had seemed fifty hours long. Biblio never complained, because he saw that Père Léopard was growing weaker. There were many days when it seemed as if the great history would never be finished. Nothing could have made Biblio waste one minute of his dear old friend's precious time. It was only because Père Léopard had made him say "yes" that Biblio had consented to go to Barbizon.

It was a sultry night. He tossed and twisted and turned in his bed. He was unaccustomed to good fortune, and it had gone to his head. "Barbizon in the morning. Betteelée. My sketch in the Rue Saint-Honoré. Barbizon! My sketch . . . ?"

These were the exciting thoughts coming one after the other. The cock crowed on his balcony before Biblio fell asleep.

Early in the morning he ran for Madame Gosse and asked her to drop in two or three times during the day to see that Père Léopard had everything he needed. When Peter and Betty Lee came for him, Biblio was waiting for them on the doorstep.

What a day it was! The sky was blue as sapphire. Along the pavements lay shriveled brown leaves. Mysteriously the flowers in the window boxes seemed to have deepened in color. No doubt some poor but artistic women had changed their pink geraniums to red. The breeze seemed nervous, as if it knew it had to blow the summer away within a week or two. Paris was astir with something that belonged to the first of September, but in all Paris very little stirred more than Biblio's heart. What a day it was!

He went to the Rue Saint-Honoré with Peter and Betty Lee and Peu de Chose. Of course, Peu de Chose! Something mounted high in Biblio's throat, something that burned like a flame when he saw his sketch in that window.

The dealer, grateful no doubt to Peter for having helped him to discover the monocle man's

treachery, seemed to enjoy telling Biblio that his work was good. "Will you let me have more of your sketches?" he had asked, smiling. "It gives me a great deal of pleasure to buy from young students, especially from those whose work I believe is going to be worth something one of these days." The dealer winked at Peter and went on: "I'm not just a sentimental old fool. I know a good thing when I see it."

"What will you give the boy for his sketches?" Peter asked.

The dealer squinted and said, "One hundred francs for something like this, and one hundred and fifty for better ones."

"They're all going to be 'better,'" said Biblio, and laughed. "I'll bring you the best of all tonight. I'm on my way to Barbizon!"

"*Tiens!*" said the dealer. "Barbizon." No doubt a vision of all the Barbizon painters flashed through the man's mind. Perhaps he was thinking that one day this boy, this tall, dark-eyed boy with a wrinkle in his brow, might be added to the list of painters from that community on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau.

Biblio felt as if the pavement he stepped upon were full of electric wires. He was tingling from head to foot as he followed Peter and Betty

Lee out of that art shop in the Rue Saint-Honoré. What a day it was!

They went to Fontainebleau! Very few people were in the Palace, so they spent about an hour looking at some of the interesting things. There was so much to see, so much that reminded Betty Lee and Peter of the ruling "houses" that it was difficult to decide what to leave out. They looked at all they could that had to do with Henry Fourth, saw the room where his son Louis Thirteenth was born, peeked into the room where Pope Pius Seventh was held prisoner until he agreed to do exactly what Napoleon wanted him to do, and then stood right in the middle of the spot where Napoleon had been when he gave up the throne in 1814.

"Bourbons came back and ruled for a while after Napoleon, didn't they, Peter?" Betty Lee asked.

Peter quoted laughingly:

"All of Europe Nap o'erthrew,
But he, in turn, at Waterloo
Met his destiny, and France
Gave Bourben kings another chance.
Eighteenth Louis, Charlie Ten,
Brought back the monarchy, and then——"

"I remember," she interrupted. "Charlie Ten made the people very angry because he told

them they must not read anything that he did not like."

"Père Léopard called Charles Tenth a dull peacock," said Biblio. "We were writing about him the other day."

They left the Palace and drove through the Forest with a delightful old *cocher* whom Betty Lee thought looked exactly like the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland*. Biblio had never heard of Alice, and they spent most of the drive through the Forest of Fontainebleau telling him about the White Rabbit, the Red Queen, and Tweedle-dum and Tweedledee.

"Describing *Alice in Wonderland* in French is excellent practice," thought Peter, and smiled to himself as he leaned back in that comfortable old seat and rolled through miles of the most beautiful woods in France.

They stopped for lunch at a small inn beyond the village of Barbizon.

The old woman who ran the inn offered to kill a rabbit for them.

Betty Lee winced. "A rabbit! With all the things in the world to eat, why eat rabbits?"

The woman was pointing out a box of brown bunnies. "They are young and tender. And I can make an excellent, a really excellent stew!"

One look at Betty Lee's face was enough for Peter. He turned to the old woman and said, "How much would one rabbit cost, say the one that you will put in the stew?"

"Not much, not very much, and it will be delicious. The rabbits are so young and tender."

Peter repeated: "How much would the stew cost?"

The woman thought it rather odd for an American gentleman to insist upon knowing the price before ordering his *déjeuner*. She looked at him shrewdly and said, "It will take one rabbit, which will be, shall we say, fifty francs?"

Betty Lee went to the rabbit box and began counting. "There are ten of them, Peter dearest, and three are babies!"

The old woman was mystified by all this. "Milles tonnerres! What has all this to do with the *déjeuner*?" Old Frenchwomen like this do not like things out of the ordinary. "A thousand thunders," she exclaimed again.

Peter tried to calm her. "My daughter and I are fond of rabbits, but not in stews. We love them alive. Will you sell your rabbits, all of them, just as they are in that box, for—for, shall we say, three hundred francs?"

The old woman was looking at Peter now with

an expression on her wrinkled face that said as plainly as if she had put it into words, "I have met crazy Americans, many of them, but you—you're the worst!" However, an offer of three hundred francs for a pen of tough little rabbits—the woman knew perfectly well that they were tough—was not an offer to be brushed aside. She began all over again to tell Peter what wonderful stews these rabbits made, how people came for miles to eat her tender rabbits.

He cut her short. "Will you sell the pen full, just as they are, for three hundred francs?"

"*Mais oui, Monsieur.*" (Yes, surely I will.) "But do you not want them skinned? It is difficult, you know, to skin a rabbit." She could not be made to understand that the rabbits were not to be killed and eaten.

Biblio hoped that Betty Lee was not hearing all this chatter about skinning the rabbits. He went over to her and helped her introduce Peu de Chose to the ten bunnies.

In a few minutes Peter and the old woman settled the matter. "Help me lift the pen into the victoria, Biblio. I haven't consulted Betty Lee about all this, but I'm sure we have the same idea."

"The woods? That's it, isn't it, darling?" She was in high spirits.

Peter smiled. "The Forest! Come along Biblio. Into the victoria they go!"

But it was not to be so easily arranged. The *cocher* objected. "It isn't regular to take a crate full of rabbits driving through the Forest. It will cost more. It would cost twenty francs more."

Peter agreed, after a little talk with the *cocher* who looked like the Cheshire Cat, upon ten francs, inasmuch as the rabbits were to ride only a little way.

"What then will the messieurs eat for their *déjeuner* if they will not eat rabbit stew?" The old woman had followed them to the victoria while the rabbits, her tough little rabbits, were being lifted into the carriage. "What will the messieurs and the little mademoiselle eat?"

"Omelet," said Peter, tired of listening to the old woman's cracked voice. "Omelet and fried potatoes and a salad."

"The rabbit stew would have been more tasty."

"We prefer OMELET!" was all Peter answered, and he said it in such a way that the woman scuttled off to her kitchen.

That was a gay luncheon. Sitting at his small table, the "Cheshire Cat" must have made signs to the innkeeper, because every time she passed him she made a face which meant no doubt that she agreed with him that the Americans were altogether out of their minds. The omelet was delicious, and so were the fried potatoes and the salad. Peter and Biblio talked of Corot and Daubigny, who had lived in the quaint little village of Barbizon. But Betty Lee was thinking hard. She was wondering if the rabbits would be happy in the Forest. She hoped to find a very deep far-off place of safety for them.

Thanks to the "Cheshire Cat," the very deep spot in the Forest was found for the ten little rabbits. Biblio made a sketch of the place and called it Rabbit Heaven.

Peu de Chose was wild during this performance. As each bunny escaped from prison, he would bark and yelp and squeal. It was certainly not as pleasant for Peu de Chose as it was for the rabbits. He was eager to chase them. Never in all his puppyhood had he whiffed such an entrancing whiff. Betty Lee explained to him that he must not be selfish, that the bunnies had never had any fun, and that he had fun all day long every day. This had no effect, however. It was not until

the last bunny had disappeared into the under-brush that Peu de Chose calmed himself.

Peter and Betty Lee and Biblio felt sleepy and comfortable and happy as they sat in the snug compartment of the train on their way back to Paris. Peu de Chose, utterly worn out after his excitement, sprawled on his back and dreamed of rabbits. His feet were stretched far apart, and now and then he shivered and barked a muffled bark in his sleep. Around his neck hung his railway ticket. Even Peu de Chose, small dog that he was, had to have his railway ticket.

What a day it had been! The sky, blue as sapphire in the morning, had turned to velvet-black, and from over the far eastern end of the city came riding a crescent moon.

"That," said Biblio, "is the lucky silver piece I used to wish on from my window in the old studio when I was little."

Betty Lee felt that she knew, but she asked just the same, because she wanted him to tell her about it. "What was it you used to wish for, Biblio?"

"Always for the same thing. I used to wish I could be an artist."

"Look! There! Just at the tip of the crescent. Do you see that bright star? It came there all of

a sudden." Peter was pointing with the end of his pipe. "It's a new star, Biblio, and I have an idea that it belongs to you."

That night Betty Lee sat on the window sill and looked up at Biblio's star. And very soon a rhyme got her.

A baby star was born to-night
To sail in a cloud balloon,
Its eyes will twinkle ev'ry night
And wink at the crescent moon.
It came to shine for Biblio
And light him along his way,
It came to say—or did he know—
That he's to be great some day.

Biblio found the monocle man waiting on the doorstep. "Good-evening," said the three-eyed gentleman. "How are things going with you this evening?"

"Perfectly," Biblio answered, smiling, for if the man had been a demon with thirty-three glass eyes instead of one, Biblio could not have helped feeling kindly toward him. What a day it had been!

"I came for more sketches. I hoped to see you on the Boul' Mich'. Where have you been? What have you been doing?"

"Working," said Biblio.

“Will you let me have a sketch? See, here is a ten-franc note,” and the monocle man flourished the small piece of blue paper in Biblio’s face.

“I will not sell you my sketch for ten francs,” said Biblio. “But I will give it to you for nothing. I will never sell you anything again as long as I live, but I am not forgetting that you were the first in the Quartier to buy my work. Here!” Biblio handed his sketch to the monocle man, and then, without waiting for him to reply, scampered upstairs.

“*Tiens!*” murmured the monocle man. “Can it be that my gamin has found me out?” Further into his eye than ever went the monocle, and he read the title of Biblio’s Rabbit Heaven. “Extraordinary! Positively extraordinary! I believe the boy is crazy enough to be a genius. No doubt it would have paid me to keep on the good side of him. Some day he will be famous. Rabbit Heaven! Now what in the name of all the saints could have put such a title into his head?”

CHAPTER XVIII

Peter Entertains All Sorts of People

BETTY LEE and Peter were not able to take Biblio away from his work for ten days, and they liked him all the more for this, but they missed him. There was something about Biblio that fitted into their way. He laughed at the same things, and thought the same things sad.

“You know, Peter,” Betty Lee remarked, “when I said at home that I hoped I should meet a prince, I was not thinking of one like Biblio. I did not think it would be such a ragged prince, but I like him better that way. I do not think I should have liked him so well if he had been dressed up.”

“He could wear anything and it would not change him,” Peter answered, and said again, just as he had said the first time he had seen Biblio lying in the grass in the garden, “I think he has a wonderful face.”

They were busy during those ten days. The

time was approaching when they had to begin to think of going home. Both of them felt jumpy feelings of delight at the thought of seeing dear old Meadowlarks and Aunt Jolly. Often, during these happy days in Paris, Betty Lee's heart had pinched at the thought of Aunt Jolly at home all alone, missing all the good times they were having in the beautiful city.

They spent several days looking for presents, and after much searching they found something for everyone. Aunt Jolly was to have two hand-made summer dresses of a pale shade of lavender crêpe de Chine. For Crocus there was in store a flaming dress of India silk. Betty Lee and Peter knew that the older Crocus and Swan grew the more they took to gay colors. For Swan, neckties were chosen that were gay enough to frighten all the mules in the valley. Diddy Duncum was to receive three little serge suits embroidered with animals, roosters, ducks, and monkeys. For Dinwiddie the choice had been a book about Alsace. On every page there was a picture of a stork, sometimes it was sitting in its nest on the rooftop of a striped house, and sometimes it was standing tall and slim in a field of poppies. Betty Lee was sure Dinwiddie would love the storks. And Hippoleon was not forgotten. He was to be

given a collar, the biggest collar to be found in Paris.

They spent one afternoon in the children's fascinating library called L'Heure Joyeuse. It was on the Rue Boutebrie, and it had been established by an American woman. What a charming spot it was, with its cheerful room lined with books all within the children's reach, and the garden—Betty Lee did not want to leave the garden. Right in the heart of a busy district here was a square dream spot closed in from the world by high walls, all green and soft with vines, and rising like wonderful toys were trees that were really as beautiful as it is possible for trees to be. How they swished in that gentle September breeze! Peter and Betty Lee made friends with several of the children who had come into the garden of L'Heure Joyeuse. This little library, it seemed, was one of their dearest possessions. They could come here to read or paint or play with their dolls or their marbles if they did not disturb the children who were reading or working on the newspaper which they wrote and illustrated all by themselves.

Twice the Rastignacs invited Peter and Betty Lee to the Sunday afternoon reunions. Informal reunions Madame La Comtesse called

them. But Betty Lee found them just as stiff as the first one. However, she and Antoinette were becoming real friends.

One evening Peter and Betty Lee were surprised by a visit from the Count. He wanted to have an old-fashioned talk with his friend Peter. Betty Lee made a courtesy, gathered up Peu de Chose, and left her father alone in the garden of the pension with his old friend. It seemed that the Count had taken a fancy to Betty Lee. He thought she had something that his children lacked. He wanted to talk of the way she was being brought up.

The long conversation ended by Peter's inviting the Count and Antoinette to spend the next day with them.

What a day this was to be!

They arrived at Mademoiselle Rabot's pension a little before noon. And to Antoinette it seemed that she was arriving at the gates of heaven. Never once in her fourteen years had she gone out alone with her father. And never, never had she spent the day with anyone outside the family, and then always with Mademoiselle Desmoulins. Antoinette, holding her father's hand, something which she was afraid to do in the presence of her brothers and sisters, clung to him now as

Betty Lee came running toward them carrying the little brown dog that had been run over that afternoon Mademoiselle Desmoulins had made such a scene. It had had scarcely any hair then. Now it had a rich brown fluffy coat.

Antoinette and Betty Lee played with Peu de Chose in the garden until their fathers said it was time to go out.

TO GO OUT!

"You don't mean we are all going out together? You and I and our fathers!" This was altogether more than Antoinette could believe.

Betty Lee told her they were going to spend the day in the garden and have lunch together in a little restaurant. Antoinette thought she must be dreaming and asked Betty Lee to give her a pinch.

First of all they went to the corner of the garden and showed Antoinette and the Count the bent old sycamore and introduced them to the pigeons.

"Tell Antoinette about Biblio," said Peter. "Tell her about the pigeon being shot and the excitement that followed."

Betty Lee told the tale, and Antoinette listened with her eyes sparkling. To her it seemed like one of the fairy tales that Mademoiselle

Desmoulins always made her skip. Poor Antoinette could not believe that she was a Rastignac sitting in the Garden of the Luxemburg, the common people's garden, listening to such a wonderful story about a boy who was nobody at all, but whom they called a prince.

When Betty Lee had finished the story about the pigeon being shot and Biblio's beating the gamin, Antoinette opened her eyes wide and asked, "What is Biblio's last name?"

"He hasn't any," Betty Lee answered. "He's going to call himself Léopard when he becomes a great artist."

A boy without a last name and a prince! Antoinette, whose family had so many names and such dreadfully long ones, could not understand this at all. But she listened eagerly while Betty Lee told her how Biblio had been left in a basket on the doorstep of an old bookworm, and how they lived together in a studio with a wonderful view.

"He's pale, Antoinette, and hungry, and there's a tired little wrinkle in his brow," she said, "and he works as hard as grown-up men."

They were sitting on the grass feeding the pigeons, something else Antoinette was never allowed to do with Mademoiselle Desmoulins.

Antoinette listened to Betty Lee and tried very hard to believe that all these things were true. Never in her life had she known anything at all about people like Biblio, who were hungry and had tired wrinkles.

Antoinette was not the only one who listened to Betty Lee. Monsieur Le Comte Albert Saint-Simon de Rastignac listened, too, and whispered to Peter, "I think she is the sweetest thing I ever saw. And I wish that Antoinette and she could be together a great deal."

Peter knocked the ashes out of his pipe and smiled. "Why not come to America and bring Antoinette with you to visit us?"

Monsieur le Comte smiled, too. "Some time, if I can arrange it without upsetting the family too much, perhaps I will."

They lunched together at the *Café Voltaire* in the hope that Biblio might come in with his sketches. But Biblio did not come, and after lunch Peter and Betty Lee took their friends to see the *Guignol* woman and the *sailboat* man.

"They seem to like you so much," Antoinette whispered. "The *sailboat* man and the *Guignol* woman in the *Tuileries* garden never smile at me."

Before they said good-bye the Count promised

that within a week there would be a *Peu de Chose* in the Rastignac household.

The bunnies set free from their box in the deep Forest of Fontainebleau had been no more delighted than Antoinette with this day with her father and his friends. She had loved him always, and from that day on she adored him.

Peter and Betty Lee had their tea in their rooms by the open window, where there was the usual gathering of pigeons. Old friends they were by this time, and each had its name. One was Jeannette, another with tan feathers was Blondinette. Peterkin's favorite was Belle Etoile (beautiful star). This one had a pointed spot on its forehead. It felt rather good to lie back against the soft cushions in the two chaises-longues. Peter said that his feet felt as if they were worn down to stubs.

Betty Lee kicked off her pumps and wiggled her toes. "Mine feel as if they had been broiled. How far did we walk with the Rastignacs, anyway?"

"Several hundred miles, at least," said Peter.

"It's funny, isn't it, how French people never seem to get tired. They go and go and go and go, and then, Peter, just when it seems time for them to die, they go on some more."

The pigeons and the cats were delighted to have them home to tea. They all but said so. When tea was over, Betty Lee asked Peter to take her to see Père Léopard and Biblio. "It's been nearly a week since we have seen them, hasn't it, Peter? And Biblio was not in the Café Voltaire at lunch time. Perhaps something has happened."

Something had. But it was not an unpleasant something.

When they knocked on the door, Betty Lee whispered to Peter, "I know something has happened. I feel it. But it feels good. I wonder what it can be."

Peter was just going to guess when Biblio opened the door.

He was very, very white, and the wrinkle in his brow deeper than ever, but his eyes were dancing. Père Léopard, poor dear old grizzly darling, was in high spirits. His face was all smiles.

He and Biblio looked at each other to see which should tell the news. Biblio smiled, and then Père Léopard told them that the book, the great history, was FINISHED.

Such excitement! Père Léopard was like a child; his small eyes filled over and over again with tears which he would wipe away with the

back of his hand and chuckle, the way a small boy chuckles when he has won a fight with someone twice his size. And Biblio was more excited over the history being finished than he had been over the sale of his own sketches in the Rue Saint-Honoré.

Peter and Betty Lee did not know how to show their friends how glad they were. "I know," thought Peter, "we'll have a supper party with hors d'œuvre. To-night of all nights we are going to celebrate!" Peter climbed on a chair to make his speech. "Run over, Biblio, and ask Tolbiac to serve us a dinner fit for all the royal families in *Père Léopard*'s great history. Tell him to give us what he would serve Louis Fourteenth. Tell him to send at least two waiters and his best tablecloth. Then invite him to come himself, and then go for Madame Gosse. Tell her she, too, is asked to join in the gayety. Hurry. The guest of honor grows impatient. Already he is thinking of hors d'œuvre." Peter waved his cane in the air and jumped off the chair.

Cheers went up. The old woman next door and her cock did not know what to make of all the noise in the bookworm's room that evening. They stood together on the balcony. The old woman was curious to know what it was all

about. After craning her neck and listening for an hour or more, she discovered that six joyous people were celebrating the completion of a great book—the greatest history ever written of the most beautiful city in the world. All this the lonely old woman explained to her cock.

The supper was Tolbiac's best. It was a feast, a well-deserved feast.

For a time Père Léopard forgot that his hands shook and that his eyes had become like smoked lanterns. With Biblio's help the old man rose to his feet and made a long speech. He lifted his wineglass and drank to the health of his favorites—Clovis, Pépin, Count Odo, Henry Fourth, Louis Fourteenth, Louis Fifteenth, Marie Antoinette, Napoleon, and the French Republic.

“Oh, Père Léopard, you forgot the Dauphin!” Betty Lee cried. “Won't you please add the Dauphin?”

Père Léopard went back and mentioned all his friends again and put the Dauphin in between Louis Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette.

Betty Lee felt as if she were standing up in honor of old friends. She was beside her father, as the bookworm mentioned all these familiar rulers of her “houses.” When her father stood up and made his speech and talked of all the

great work which Père Léopard had done, how splendidly Biblio had helped him, and what a brilliant future lay before Biblio, Betty Lee and Madame Gosse both cried.

"If only you could have seen him as he was that first time I saw him in that basket," she whispered to Betty Lee, "just a tiny, half-frozen mite." Madame Gosse was laughing as well as crying.

Then Biblio stood up and said that he wanted to say something about the most wonderful friends in the world, his American friends. "We owe everything to you, Monsieur Gray, and to you Betteelée, everything! The history would never have been finished if you had not made it possible. And I, I shall never make a sketch as long as I live that I will not thank you for believing in me. I shall work and work, and if I do anything at all worth while, it will be because, because—" He did not seem to know how to finish this sentence.

"Help me up, Biblio. Help me up!" Père Léopard had something else to say. He wanted to say that from that moment on for the rest of his life Biblio's name was to be Biblio Léopard. "It *has* to be, because I have dedicated the history to my adopted son, Biblio Léopard."

This was altogether too much for Madame Gosse. She burst into floods of tears. Peter and Tolbiac were cheering. Biblio and Betty Lee were looking at each other smiling, one thinking of a dark-eyed prince, the other, of a little girl from a treetop.

The celebration ended when the *glaces*, pink and yellow ice cream it had been, and the *petits fours*, such glossy little round white cakes, were finished. Betty Lee was afraid Peu de Chose would be ill. He had had four cakes and a plate of the pink ice cream.

Betty Lee and Peter promised Père Léopard to come for Biblio in the morning and to go with him while he took the great manuscript to the publishers.

CHAPTER XIX

The Accident

BETTY LEE and Peu de Chose slept later than usual in the morning. But Peter arose early and went to the steamship company. He was back tapping on their door before either of them had opened their eyes.

“Don’t you know,” he called, “we promised to go to the publishers with Biblio?”

The reply to this was a small growl from Peu de Chose, who disliked having his mistress disturbed. Betty Lee was awake in an instant. “I’ll be ready in no time. Come in, darling, and tell these hungry cats that my breakfast, their breakfast, will be up in a minute.”

Peter said to her that she looked like a bunny in an Easter egg, and gave her a kiss on the top of her curly head.

Betty Lee snuggled the comforter about her. “Where have you been so early in the morning, Peter?”

"To the steamship company to see about our tickets. There isn't much time left, you know."

Both of them were silent for a few minutes. Perhaps they were thinking the same thing. But neither one spoke of it, and presently Peter offered to take Peu de Chose for a walk.

After Peter had gone downstairs, Betty Lee kept on thinking. "I wonder what will become of Biblio. I wonder if we will ever see him again. And Père Léopard, what will happen to him? How will they get through the winter? Will Tolbiac keep their room warm? Will they have enough to eat? Will the history bring them any money, or will Biblio have to make it all?" She looked at the sketch he had given her; it was standing on the mantel, and before she knew what was happening her eyes filled with tears. "I'd rather not have found a prince at all than find him and then lose him." She wondered if Peter had thought of this, and if he was making up his mind to bring her back to Paris the next summer. "If we do come," she told herself, trying to wipe away the tear stains, "we'll bring Aunt Jolly. She would love to know Biblio and Père Léopard." Here the tears came again, because she was thinking that Père Léopard, dear grizzly old darling, might not be alive another summer.

She fed the pigeons and the cats and was ready, all the tears brushed away, by the time Peter and Peu de Chose came back.

Biblio was waiting for them on his steps with the manuscript of the great history under his arm. He, too, had done considerable thinking. He was sad at the thought of his friends going home. But he was grateful to the chance that had let him know the little girl from the treetops. He knew, of course, that every other little girl would seem plain compared to Betty Lee. So he made up his mind never to look at other little girls, but just to go on thinking about her forever. "Everything I do," he told himself, "I will do in the hope that some day she will be able to say that I deserve the name of Léopard."

They started off to the publishers, and when they had gone a little way down the Boulevard Sainte-Germain and were turning into the Rue Bonaparte, Betty Lee said, "I wonder how the bunnies are? Do you suppose they are having a good time in the Forest?"

Biblio said that they were in heaven and he told her that he had given Rabbit Heaven to the monocle man.

Peter smiled and asked Biblio how much he had charged.

"I didn't charge him anything. I gave it to him. I will never sell him anything again, but I wanted to give him something because he was the first person in the Quartier to buy my sketches."

In a few minutes Peter said, "Do you know, Biblio, that I am sure some day you are to be a great man, not only because of your art, but because of the way you feel about things. I wish—"

"What do you wish, Peter?" Betty Lee asked, hoping it was the same thing she had been wishing all morning and, indeed, for many mornings.

Peter looked at her and answered in English, "I wish, darling, that Biblio could have the education he deserves."

She sighed and said, "Oh." This was not what she had been wishing.

"The old woman next door, with her cock, knows a professor of the Ecole des Beaux Arts. She brought him to see us last evening after you had gone home. The old woman said she had heard our celebration. I think she wanted something to eat. I was sorry there were no cakes left for her. Well, it turned out that the professor and Père Léopard had been friends ever and ever so long ago. They talked for hours and hours. I thought they would never stop. The old woman

couldn't drag the professor away and went home finally without him. I fell asleep in the chair trying to listen to all that they were saying. But I woke up suddenly. The professor was pinching my ear and telling me—what do you think he was telling me?"

Neither Betty Lee nor Peter could guess.

"That he would give me lessons for nothing. That I could join one of his classes at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Think of it! The Ecole des Beaux Arts, one of the finest art schools in the world! Think of it!"

Peter laid his hand on Biblio's shoulder and told him how glad and how proud he was. But Betty Lee did not know very much about the Ecole-whatever-it-was. Then, too, there were other thoughts in her mind. She wanted Biblio to study, of course, and to be a great, a great artist, but she wanted him to keep warm in the winter, and have enough to eat, and enough to wear.

They were walking about the Quais now and had come almost to the Pont Royal. All the while Betty Lee kept looking down at the embankments and at the dark little shadowed spots under the bridges. She could not forget that not very long ago there had been a chance of Père

Léopard's and Biblio's having to sleep down there. Biblio and her father were talking about the great school and how wonderful it was going to be. But she was sad.

"Betteelée," said Biblio, "I want you to look at this bridge." He drew her to the edge of the Quai, and they leaned over the stone wall between two of the *bouquinistes*' (booksellers') stalls. "I think," Biblio said, "that of all the lovely bridges in Paris this is the most lovely. It's so white. Its shadows dance on the water like fairies. Look! Do you see those odd shapes, white and quivering, on the water?"

Betty Lee looked at the white shapes, and she might have been caught by a rhyme if she had not been so interested in what Biblio was saying.

Peter was looking, too. He was smoking his pipe and thinking very hard. He was thinking that the Ecole des Beaux Arts was a wonderful school filled with splendid students, but older, all of them much older than Biblio. Peter was hoping that they would not influence him, spoil his clear outlook on life, fill his head with silly notions of amusement, make him forget that he was a real Bohemian.

"See the trees, Betteelée. See how they bend toward that first and second arch. Look at their



*“Of all the lovely bridges in Paris this is the
most lovely”*

color. It isn't green at all, but blue and purple. Can you understand why I call the Quartier my Beautiful Kingdom? There isn't any other place in the world with such color."

Betty Lee watched the water and the trees and the shadows for a few minutes, and then she said, "I think it is very beautiful, Biblio, really beautiful, but I think there's something in you that makes everything seem that way. You don't see ugly things, do you?"

Biblio had not thought about it, and she went on:

"You've never been anywhere but Paris, have you? Paris and Versailles and Chantilly and Fontainebleau?"

Biblio shook his head.

"I think," said Betty Lee, "that you could go round and round the world ever so many times and find something beautiful everywhere. I think you'd——" She did not finish the sentence. She wanted to, but it was the kind of sentence she did not like to finish without asking her father.

They left the Quais and turned onto the Pont Royal.

People were hurrying across the bridge. Omnibuses rumbled past, any number of taxis whirled by, blowing their duck horns. It was a

busy, noisy place, this Pont Royal, very different from the dreamy spots of the Quartier and from the emerald-green of the enchanted corner of the garden.

Betty Lee did not like to cross the Pont Royal. She had crossed it on that dreadfully long walk with the Rastignacs, and come back along with Peu de Chose, poor little Peu de Chose limp and bleeding in her arms. There was something about the Pont Royal that frightened her. It made her think of Peu de Chose's accident. How different he seemed now! How pretty and soft he was! Betty Lee hugged him close to her, and so busy was she caressing the top of his small round head that she did not notice that she stepped off the curb.

Just at that instant an omnibus came thundering along. The driver saw Betty Lee, blew his horn, and did his best to swerve to one side. But there was not time or space!

Biblio saw what was about to happen and, quick as a flash, he threw himself in front of Betty Lee so that the wheel of the omnibus struck him instead of her.

It knocked him to the ground and swept past without touching Betty Lee!

A crowd collected. But Biblio was not hurt

seriously, just stunned and bruised. "It is nothing," he told them all. "I'm all right, Monsieur Gray, really I am. I can stand."

Peter had lifted him and carried him to the pavement.

Betty Lee, knocked and jostled by the crowd, was doing the best she could to stay close to them.

It had been a close call, and all three of them were trembling. Suddenly Biblio caught Peter by the arm and cried out, "The manuscript! Where is the manuscript?"

It was gone!

Biblio had dropped it.

In the confusion and the scuffle of feet, it had been pushed, scattered, blown perhaps into—The horrible thought came into Peter's and Biblio's minds at the same instant. They leaned over the railing of the bridge, and there, fluttering across the water, they saw hundreds and hundreds of white scraps! There, blowing in all directions, drifting here with the current on the surface and sinking there under a swirl of pale green water, were the pages of Père Léopard's great history, the work of forty years, the work of his life!

Betty Lee screamed. Peter was silent. And

Biblio, Biblio started to jump off the bridge. He would have given his life to catch those fluttering scraps of paper. But one instant of watching them made him realize the hopelessness, the folly of trying to save them.

With Peter's arms around him, Biblio broke down and sobbed. In that dreadful moment Betty Lee's heart seemed to break wide open as she looked at Biblio and knew that he had dropped *Père Léopard*'s great history to save her life.

The crowds on the bridge swept on. Taxis quacked their horns. Omnibuses thundered by. People strained their necks to see what had happened. But discovering only a boy sobbing, they shrugged their shoulders and passed on.

Betty Lee watched the sheets of paper disappear. It did not take long for the river current to swallow them. She felt as if she were watching something die.

"I must go," said Biblio after a few minutes. "I must go and tell him what has happened. Oh! Monsieur Gray, Betteelée! What can I say to him? What can I do?" Biblio, always pale, was white as death. The wrinkle in his brow had drawn into a deep line. "What shall I say? What can I do?"

They had started back across the bridge. Peter knew that he had never faced anything so difficult. There seemed to be no way to help this boy whom he had learned to love as much as if he had belonged to him. And the poor old bookworm whose life's work had gone for nothing! Peter was stunned. He could not think. "Must you tell him, Biblio? Must you tell him at once? Isn't there some way?" This is all that Peter could find to say, and he said it over and over.

Betty Lee was silent. But she slipped her hand into Biblio's and hoped with all her heart that he knew how she felt.

Somehow or other, without seeing anything at all, or thinking more than disconnected thoughts, they made their way back to *Père Léopard*.

"I must see him alone, Monsieur Gray. I must." Biblio passed the back of his hand across his forehead as if to brush away the wrinkle. Then without a word he turned and ran up the stairs.

Peter and Betty Lee did not know what to do. There was nothing to do. They spent a long dismal afternoon in the garden. A hundred times she said, "Let's go back and see if we can help." And a hundred times Peter started to go. But each time he stopped. "Biblio asked us not to come. He said he wanted to talk with *Père Léo-*

pard alone. We don't know what he has told him. We might say the wrong thing. It is best not to go."

For the first time in her life Betty Lee had to stand by and watch something suffer and know that she could do nothing to help. It was not just something either, but Biblio who had brought it all upon himself in order to save her.

That afternoon and evening were miserable for Betty Lee and Peter.

For Biblio they were tragic.

Hardly knowing what he said or how he said it, he blurted out the truth to Père Léopard

The old man did not understand at first. He thought that Biblio was talking about something belonging to the Americans, something they prized very highly which had blown out of their hands and fallen into the river. "Too bad, too bad," he mumbled. "It's a shame. They are such fine people. I am sorry to have them lose—what did you say it was, Biblio—a book?—What kind of book?"

Biblio buried his face in his hands and wept. He could not say the awful words. After a few minutes he felt something grip his shoulder, something far more powerful than Père Léopard's trembling hand.

But it was Père Léopard's hand. He had understood suddenly, and in that one awful moment the force of his youth came back! He was frantic. Not knowing what he did, he threw Biblio to the floor.

He lay there quivering. He wished with all his heart that Père Léopard would kill him.

But Père Léopard's strength lasted only a moment, then something gave way in his head. He tottered and fell back on his bed, a very weak old man. For hours and hours he lay there, not moving, not speaking, just staring at the ceiling and holding onto Biblio's hand. Toward midnight he closed his eyes and dropped off to sleep.

Biblio crept away from the bed and began a long and almost impossible search.

He knew that many of Père Léopard's notes were scribbled on bits of pad paper and tucked here and there between the pages of his *choux*, and that others, hundreds of them, were scattered about the desk or stuffed into old boxes. Many had been destroyed. But Biblio spent all that night trying to collect those notes. The work he had done for Père Léopard was all there. Fortunately Biblio had kept a copy of this. But the rest, all the pages and pages that Père Léopard had written himself during forty years, were

scattered. "If I could tell him when he wakes that there is another copy, almost a complete copy, and that I will arrange it for him, write it all out for him, perhaps—perhaps—" Biblio tiptoed to the bedside and looked down at the wrinkled old face.

By the candlelight it seemed to him that *Père Léopard* was scarcely breathing.

Père Léopard was scarcely breathing!

Biblio forgot the papers, forgot everything except one thing—*Père Léopard* was dying. *Père Léopard*, whom he loved more than anything in the world, was dying. He, Biblio, had killed him.

Biblio did not think what he was doing. He could not think. He just knew one thing. He could do nothing to save *Père Léopard*'s life. Nothing! But something had to be done. Someone had to do something!

Biblio rushed into the street.

In the back of his mind was the thought of *Sainte-Geneviève*. Her prayers had saved Paris from Attila the Hun, way back in the First Century. It had been her prayers, too, which turned the Germans from the gates of Paris in 1914. At any rate, Biblio believed this, and he believed this great saint of the city he loved would save *Père Léopard*. He ran as fast as he

could to the place Sainte-Geneviève and threw himself on the steps of the church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont. Here was the shrine of Sainte-Geneviève. Biblio cried out to her to help him.

Sparrows were chirping in the court, and the old woman's cock was crowing noisily when Biblio stole back into the room and looked down at his old friend.

He had not stirred.

"He will not die," Biblio whispered. Over and over again he murmured just this, "God will not let him die." Then, as the full light of day spread over Paris, Biblio fell asleep.

News of this kind travels mysteriously and rapidly. Biblio might have slept for several hours if it had not been for this. But Madame Gosse, dear faithful Madame Gosse, and the woman with the cock, and Tolbiac, all heard, and they all came.

They were whispering on the stairs when Peter and Betty Lee arrived.

"After I told him, I thought that he was going to die, Monsieur Gray," Biblio explained. "His breath! It came hardly at all! And he was so still!"

One look at Biblio's face had sent a sharp pain into Betty Lee's heart. But she did not say

anything. She knew that her father would do something for him.

Peter suggested sending for a doctor. One lived, it seemed, just across the street. Madame Gosse went for him at once, and the others waited on the steps until he came and followed Biblio into Père Léopard's room.

To Betty Lee it seemed hours waiting there for the doctor to come out.

When he did come all he said was, "My fee is seventy-five francs. Who will give me my fee? It is seventy-five francs."

Peter handed the man three blue paper notes marked twenty, another marked ten, and one pink one marked five and asked, "What is the matter with him? What is it that he needs? What shall we do for him?"

The doctor began counting the paper notes. Very deliberately he folded them and laid them in his purse. Then he shrugged his shoulders and said, "What is the matter with him? Do for him? There is nothing the matter with him except exhaustion. Do for him? There is nothing to do for him except let him rest. Feed him, and—and see that he has plenty of sunlight."

"If he has this, will he be all right again? Will he be able to write, to finish his book?" Betty

Lee stepped directly in front of the doctor to keep him from slipping out the door before he answered her questions.

“Mais oui !” (But why not!) “There is nothing the matter with him, I said, except exhaustion, starvation! What he needs is food, good food, rest, and plenty of sunlight!”

Betty Lee let the doctor pass. She was glad to let him pass. She supposed he was a good doctor, but he made her think of an insect, some sort of round, black insect. But she had not time to think about him. There was only one thought in her mind, one great thought. She looked at her father, and she did not look in vain. There in his kind blue eyes was the wonderful twinkle.

Peter, her wonderful Peter, took her hand and drew Biblio to one side.

Betty Lee knew what was going to happen, and her heart beat so fast that she could not breathe as she listened to her father say all the things that she had been longing for days and days to have him say.

CHAPTER XX

The Wrinkle Grows Less Deep

A BOUT the streets of Paris there wanders a man called Le Commissionnaire. He is a kind of porter. He wears a peaked cap and a blue blouse over baggy trousers, and he carries a small truck not unlike the ones which the cross-looking porters had wheeled along the dock in New York. This porter walks about hoping that someone will wish to have a pet dog taken for a walk or a parcel delivered from one of the small shops without a wagon, or, best of all, a trunk carried down from a third or fourth floor. One such porter was delighted to be summoned about the fifteenth of September, in the Rue de l'Odéon. There were four large boxes of books to be carried downstairs and taken to the Saint-Lazare station and put on one of the trains for a steamer going to America. Le Commissionnaire wagged his head over the weight of these boxes. But he was glad of the business and went for another porter, a friend of his who had an elderly horse.

While the porter and his friend and the weary old horse toiled over the boxes of "little cabbages," good-byes were being said in the garden.

The sailboat man could not smile any more. The Guignol woman put her arms, motherly fashion, around Biblio and said that it was a pity to lose a gamin like him even for a little while. Madame Trèfle supplied some wonderful chocolate with biscuits. She said she was sure that the American young lady would like to give her friends the goldfishes a farewell treat.

Biblio made a special call on the professor at the École des Beaux Arts, and Peter and Betty Lee went with him.

"I can never thank you enough, Monsieur," Biblio said to the professor. "I should not go, although I want to very much, if it were not for Père Léopard. The doctor says he must have rest and good food and plenty of sunlight. And my friends, my wonderful friends, want to give him all these things. You understand?"

The professor winked over Biblio's shoulder at Peter and said, "I have an idea that it is not only for the bookworm that your friends take you back with them to America. I have an idea that they want to have you grow strong enough for all the difficult studies that lie ahead of you,

if you are to become a great artist. Is it not so, Monsieur Gray?"

Peter shook hands with the professor and put just a little more feeling into it than one usually puts into a handshake. The two men understood each other as well as if they had talked about it for months.

"When Biblio comes back, Monsieur——" Betty Lee hesitated. "I don't know what your name is."

"André, Jules André," the professor told her.

"When Biblio comes back to Paris, Monsieur André, you will let him come to the classes, won't you? He will be away only six or seven months."

"There will be a place, there is a place in the Ecole des Beaux Arts always for such as Biblio. I shall welcome him gladly, and I shall expect to see him fat and strong and perhaps, shall we say, with pink cheeks instead of these white ones?"

Most difficult of all was getting Père Léopard ready. In the first place, it had taken several days to persuade him that he wanted to go. He had been frightened by the thought of the long voyage. But Peter and Betty Lee had succeeded in making him understand that the sunlight of Meadowlarks, the rest he could have there, and

Aunt Jolly's cooking would make him a young man again so that he would be able to rewrite his great history. Then the *choux*! Their being packed and sent away had thrown the old man into a fever! His clothes had worried him. He was afraid that he was not fit to travel. No one, perhaps, but Betty Lee could have put his mind at ease on this subject. But when he saw the boxes of his *choux* being carried away by the porters, Père Léopard almost lost his mind. He stood at the top of the stairs and gave the porters twelve hundred directions. Just before it was time to leave, the woman with the cock, Tolbiac, several of Père Léopard's old cronies, the bookstand men from the Quais, and Madame Gosse arrived to say *au revoir*. This added to the confusion.

Père Léopard's grizzly eyebrows were jumping up and down. "The beheading of Robespierre," he mumbled, "was nothing to this. Nothing!"

Peter and Betty Lee and Biblio could not keep from laughing at their dear old bookworm and at all the excitement they were causing.

Poor dear Père Léopard, none of it seemed funny to him.

Good-bye to Madame Gosse was difficult for Biblio. She was not like Aunt Jolly. When Madame Gosse felt like crying, she cried. She cried

now so that the tears ran down her none too clean face and carried long dark smudges with them. These she wiped on her sleeve and then she kissed Biblio again and again until his face was as dirty as hers.

Peter was relieved when this was over. He was afraid Betty Lee might suggest taking Madame Gosse, too.

It was an odd group that they left standing in the middle of the street, waving them good-bye.

Père Léopard would not sit back in the taxi, but leaned on his cane and balanced himself on the edge of the seat. He disliked all modern inventions and most of all the taxi!

Biblio and Betty Lee smiled at each other. "Dear grizzly old darling," she thought. "I would not have gone home without him for anything." They were drawing near to the Saint-Lazare station. Betty Lee took a long breath. "My last whiff of the Paris smell," she thought, and said over to herself the rhyme:

"Oh, I'm glad, I'm glad I came,
To smell the smell without a name!"

That peculiar odor of Paris was as mysterious to her now as it had been the day she came. How she loved it! She was sad at the thought of

leaving Paris, and this feeling was all mixed up with the joy of going back to Aunt Jolly and Meadowlarks. "I hope the pigeons and the cats will have enough to eat all winter," she sighed.

"I held my breath when we were leaving the pension," said Peter, "for fear that you were going to ask to bring them with you."

"I did want to," she said. "I should have asked you to let me bring one or two of the pigeons, if Mademoiselle Rabot had not promised me she would feed them and have them fat as butter by next spring when Biblio comes back. He is going to call on them, aren't you, Biblio?"

Biblio did not have to answer, for the taxi was drawing up in front of the station.

It was none too easy getting Père Léopard and all the bags through the station and to the right compartment in the train. The old man had an idea that he belonged somewhere else, in a third-class compartment, perhaps. He was not clear in his mind about where he should go, but he was certain he should not travel first class. After much talking, they settled him in a seat by the window of their compartment. Biblio said he would stay with him. And Betty Lee and Peter stepped down to the platform with Peu de Chose for a little air.

Who should come along but Monsieur le Comte Albert Saint-Simon de Rastignac and his daughter. Antoinette was bringing Betty Lee a bunch of pink roses. "Father took me on our way over here to the flower market. It was beautiful. Father let me talk to one of the old flower women. I've never done it before, because Mademoiselle Desmoulins would not let me. Such a wrinkled old woman, Betty Lee. She smiled at me, too, and she let me look at all her flowers. She had so many, and all the other flower women had so many that the sidewalk was just like a garden. I loved it. I'd never been to a *marché des fleurs* (a flower market). We bought these for you."

Betty Lee would have hugged her if she had not been afraid it would be impolite. But Antoinette looked as if she might like to be hugged, and there was a tear in the corner of her eye.

"I wish you were going to America with Peter and me," said Betty Lee.

"We are," the Count answered. "My daughter and I are coming to America some time within the next three or four months." He looked at Peter. "I am anxious, most anxious that Antoinette have an opportunity to learn about some of the things you have over there which we do not have at all."

Antoinette asked Betty Lee if they might come to see her in America. "I should like to see how much Peu de Chose will grow. Lucky little brown puppy! Where do you keep him when you are traveling?"

"In a basket," she said. "Peu de Chose loves his basket."

The small brown puppy was looking uneasily toward the train. No doubt he had heard the word "basket"—the magic word which meant he was going somewhere.

"Father is going to buy me a Peu de Chose this morning. We are going to the shop as soon as your train goes. I think I shall call it 'America,' because I should never have had it if it had not been for you and your father. I want to thank you." And here, much to Betty Lee's surprise, Antoinette kissed her on both cheeks.

All the while Biblio was having all he could do to keep Père Léopard quiet. The old man was afraid Peter and Betty Lee would be left behind.

Peter wanted to take the Count and Antoinette to the compartment to introduce them to Père Léopard and Biblio, but the guard tooted his little trumpet and cried, "*En voiture!*" (All aboard!)

There was just time to climb aboard.

They leaned out of the window, all four of

them, and waved good-bye. Biblio and Père Léopard had no idea, of course, that they were waving to a count and his daughter.

Monsieur le Comte Albert Saint-Simon de Rastignac smiled as he watched the Americans and their strange guests leaving Paris. Many things were going through the Count's mind. One was that that boy, that gamin who was being taken to America, had a very fine face, in fact, an extremely fine face.

To Antoinette the whole thing was like a fairy story. Everything the Americans did seemed like the fairy tales Mademoiselle Desmoulins made her skip. "Why do they take that old man with the shaggy eyebrows and that dark-eyed boy to America?"

This was a question which the Count had difficulty in answering. What he said was that the Americans liked to do things for people without money. "Strange, isn't it, but rather wonderful, don't you think?"

Antoinette thought it very wonderful indeed. "If you could have seen her pick up that puppy, Father. I shall never forget it. And now, now, is it too much to ask that we go and find our puppy?"

When the Rastignacs make a promise, it be-

comes a matter of honor. In less than an hour, Antoinette was carrying home a small brown puppy, not unlike Peu de Chose, but whose name was to be "America."

As they came into Pontoise, Betty Lee told Biblio how her father had gone for strawberries and been left behind in the station, and she told him about the dear little ladies who had been so kind to her and how frightened they had been at the mention of the Quartier. Neither Biblio nor Betty Lee could understand this at all.

They were standing in the corridor looking through the long windows, letting Peu de Chose look, too, at the towns tucked under the hills. Biblio liked the red roofs, and he loved the cows. He had seen but few cows in his life and was fascinated by these clean, contented creatures browsing through what he insisted were blue fields. While they were in the corridor, Peter and Père Léopard spoke of the lost book. The old man wanted to know how it had happened, and he said, "I asked Biblio, but he would tell me nothing except that he had dropped it." Père Léopard covered his face with his hand. The thought of this was almost more than he could bear. But he wanted to know, he had to know how the accident had happened.

Peter thought the journey exciting enough for the old man and hesitated to go on with the conversation, but he felt he ought to know the truth. He told him that Biblio had dropped the manuscript to save Betty Lee's life.

Père Léopard groaned. He was thinking how he had struck Biblio.

Peter thought Père Léopard was grieving for his book and said, "Don't worry, Père Léopard. After you have had a good rest you will be strong enough to rewrite the history. Biblio has collected almost all the notes. He showed them to me last night."

Père Léopard groaned again. "It's not the book I am thinking about. It's—it's something else," and he told Peter what he had done. "I wasn't myself. I was mad, raving mad. What can I do to make up for this?"

Peter said many soothing things, and because he was Peter he knew just what to say. Gradually he turned the conversation toward the "little cabbages," and the thought of his treasures occupied the old man's mind for the rest of the journey to Havre.

"*Mes petits choux*," he murmured as he clung to Peter and Biblio on the gangplank. "Are you sure my books will get onto this great boat?"

"I will make sure, Père Léopard," said Peter. "I will promise you that they will have a safe trip and that before long they will be sitting beside my books at home."

Betty Lee was so afraid that Père Léopard would fall on the steep gangplank, that she couldn't speak until her old friend was safely installed in the steamer chair in the sun, in the sunniest of sun, the kind that feels like flame.

Biblio had never seen the sea, and he stood beside Betty Lee looking down at the water lapping the wharf. Green water it was, and filled with refuse and blocks of wood. To him it seemed beautiful. "Look Betteelée, see those colors, there under those tall logs."

"Those are piles," she told him. Then she looked at the water. "I see the color. Wonderful, isn't it? Full of such purple shadows."

"There are twenty purples there, Betteelée, and there are blues, too, deep blues."

"Just wait until you see the middle of the ocean, Biblio. Wait until everything is just water," and she repeated:

"The ocean's just a water world
And very, very blue,
It's full of little waves all curled
Up round and white and new."

The whistle began to blow its deep blast. Peter was standing between them, one arm was around Biblio's shoulder and the other linked through Betty Lee's.

"I've got the downsie feeling in my tummy, Peter, and look at Peu de Chose. Doesn't he look funny? I think he has it, too."

Peu de Chose certainly had an extremely odd expression on his small round face as he sat on the railing of the boat and nestled against Betty Lee's arm. Biblio and Peter and Betty Lee all laughed at him.

But the whistle with its long blast silenced them. They could not laugh while it was blowing. Nor could they smile as they felt the heart of that great steamer begin to beat. They knew that in just a moment they would be sailing away from France.

"Biblio," whispered Betty Lee as they swung about in the harbor and headed out to sea, "do you think you are going to be happy away from your Beautiful Kingdom?"

Things were stirring inside of Biblio which made it difficult for him to speak.

Peter answered for him. "I think," and he told them how long he had been thinking about it, "that Biblio will like Meadowlarks and look

upon it as part of his Kingdom. I believe he will feel about the valley as you and I felt about the Quartier."

Père Léopard, snug as a bug in a rug, called out to them, "Are you sure, Biblio, that you have all the history notes? Are you sure you found them all?"

Biblio sat down on the edge of his dear old friend's steamer chair and told him, just as he had told him at least one hundred times before, that not all but almost all the history notes were safe and sound, enough anyway for him to rewrite his book as soon as he was strong.

"*Bon*," murmured the old man. "You are the best boy in the world." Then the old bookworm hunched himself into the rug that Betty Lee was tucking about his neck.

"Look, Peter," said Betty Lee. "Look at Père Léopard. Already the fresh air has brought color into his face."

Père Léopard grunted. He did not care a fig for color. All that interested him was how soon he would be able to begin to rewrite his great history and whether his *choux* were safe, and whether Biblio would forget that he had struck him.

Betty Lee was severe with Père Léopard and told him he would have to stop fussing about the

“little cabbages” or go back to live in Tolbiac’s cellar. She looked at Biblio to help her out with her scolding. That was a happy moment.

It may have been the sun, it may have been the fresh salt air, and it may have been the thought of nothing, absolutely nothing to worry about, but whatever it was, the wrinkle in Biblio’s brow had begun to disappear.

CHAPTER XXI

Biblio Finds Another Beautiful Kingdom

HOW the boat creaked and groaned; Biblio lay in his second-story bed (he did not know what to call an upper berth). He wondered what all the noises were, and he asked Père Léopard, who was in the downstairs bed, what he thought they could be.

Père Léopard said it was the timber complaining because it was being stretched and strained, tossing about in the rough sea. "We're running through a bad storm, Biblio, a terrible storm. I knew we should have a storm. The ocean's full of them. I wish I had stayed in Paris."

Biblio did not answer. How the wind whistled! How the spray dashed against the small round window! What great rolling mounds of water there were! How green it was! How angry it seemed to be! Biblio closed his eyes and listened to Père Léopard saying over and over again, "I wish I had not come! I wish I was back in Paris!"

Biblio thought of his Beautiful Kingdom. Nothing there, not even the winter winds nor the snow, had been so fearful as this storm that was pitching the great steamer about as if it were a chip of wood. Biblio wondered why he was glad he had come, and he knew that it was because he wanted to be with Betty Lee and her father. No storm, no matter how violent, could make him wish he had not come. "Père Léopard," he said, "please don't say that you wish you were back in Paris. We are with Betteelée and Monsieur Gray, you know. And they are the most wonderful people in the world."

Père Léopard may have felt a little ashamed of himself; at any rate, he complained no more, and said he was sorry to have seemed ungrateful. "It's because my head is swimming about like goldfish. It's the motion of the boat. I'll be all right when we get on land, if we ever get on land again."

Betty Lee, wrapped in an oilskin coat, was up on the top deck talking to Pierre, the sailor, who had believed she had thrown overboard the deck games. She was glad that he was sorry for having thought she did anything so mean. "How high the spray flies! See now it blows away like feathers. What beautiful colors there are in the foam

down there, Pierre, in those deep gullies between the waves."

Pierre was used to foam and high seas. He could not see anything beautiful about them.

Betty Lee's face was crusted with salt, her curls were wrapped tight from the dampness. She was leaning over the rail, watching the angry sea, and thinking that since she had been in France she had learned to see things differently. She had learned to find many shades of blue and lavender, for one thing, in color that used to be just blue. Biblio had taught her this. He had taught her many things. She wondered if her own Meadowlarks would seem more wonderful than ever because of this new way of finding beauty.

Two days the storm lasted, and then suddenly it stopped. High wind, high seas, everything just fell away, and the sun came out to beat down on a vast smooth world of deep blue.

Up on the boat deck in a sunny spot, Peter and Betty Lee spent hours teaching Père Léopard and Biblio English. "Aunt Jolly does not speak or understand one word of French," Peter explained. "We must teach you something, or there will be difficult times at Meadowlarks."

Père Léopard learned only a little, but Biblio managed to pick up some phrases and was able

to catch the meaning of many words when they were spoken slowly.

Two days from New York Peter and Betty Lee sent this wireless message to Aunt Jolly:

Old man, young man, small brown pup,
Know you're glad to put them up.

If Aunt Jolly had not been Aunt Jolly, she might not have been pleased. But she was so pleased that she could not close her eyes the night after she received this poetic message. "Old man, young man, small brown pup," she kept repeating over and over again. "Old man!" Aunt Jolly was puzzled. "What kind of old man? Someone with rheumatism like Culpepper Jones, a professor of German or Italian or Spanish to teach Betty Lee, or——" Aunt Jolly could not imagine what kind of old man Peter and Betty Lee were bringing to Meadowlarks. But she prepared the second-floor corner room, the sunniest room in the house. "Old men need sunlight, no matter what kind of old men they are. And they need plenty of warm blankets and an easy chair." If Aunt Jolly had known Père Léopard, she could not have made his room more comfortable. Of course, she had no way of guessing about the "little cabbages." If she had she would have found

bookcases, so perhaps it was just as well she did not guess, because Père Léopard preferred, as we know, to have his *choux* in piles on the floor.

"Young man," this was most puzzling. "Now what kind of young man can it be? Surely not a rich one! Some young student, no doubt. Some boy who needs food. Peter and Betty Lee wrote about a boy with an odd name and a fine face. It's probably that boy, the one they took with them on their picnics. That's who it is, sure as I'm born." All this Aunt Jolly had discussed with Crocus, who had not replied except to shake her head and mumble that it was her opinion that there were "'nough things 'bout de place as 'twas." The small brown pup did not surprise Aunt Jolly.

The valley wore its best blue haze. Meadow-larks, in September red and brown, rustled welcome in its treetops. Toasting in the warm sun, the front doorstep waited to squeak, "Hello." It had missed the familiar patter of Betty Lee's feet. Dinwiddie, no taller but somewhat stouter, waited on the stone wall. Diddy Duncum did not understand anything at all about people coming home from France, but he did know that the pretty lady who had held him on her lap and had sung to him would be back soon. He had never

been able to understand why she went away. Swan and Crocus, in their Sunday best, a gay Sunday best it was, too, with many shades of crimson, hovered about the front door in case "Marsus and Little Missy comed fo'dey knowed." Hippoleon, so large now that it was difficult for him to move indoors without knocking over the furniture, kept his usual guard at the entrance. His nose quivered more than usual, for he seemed to sense something in the bonfire smoke and downward flutter of the leaves which told him that his little mistress, his beloved mistress, was coming back any moment.

The morning they were to arrive, that most wonderful morning of all the mornings in the world, Aunt Jolly cried until her eyes were pink like a bunny's. They were the first tears she had dared to shed since Peter and Betty Lee had gone away. But she let them come now and welcomed each one that trickled down her cheek. Were they not to be kissed away any minute by Betty Lee?

Standing on the station platform Aunt Jolly wondered all sorts of things—if Betty Lee had grown, if all the beautiful frocks copied from the Paris ones were to be long enough, if her soft curls were smooth as ever, or whether they had

suffered from lack of brushing, if Peter and she had worn themselves out with these guests, this old man, whoever he was, and this young man. "I'm sure it's the one with the fine face," thought Aunt Jolly, and went on wondering if Peter's socks had lasted or whether he had had to wear them with holes. Peter had such teeth in his toes. Aunt Jolly smiled. How silly it was to think of all these things now. They did not matter a bit. In a few minutes, the train would whistle in the valley and come puffing into the station.

Swan and Crocus and Dinwiddie and Diddy Duncum were very restless waiting for that train. Swan and Crocus hummed. They always hummed when they were waiting for things. Diddy Duncum asked so many questions that Crocus told him he was "a good-fo'-nothin' bit o' black trash."

Never in the seventy-five years that it had been puffing through the valley had the train come into the station on time. But it came at last. It came at last! And with it came Betty Lee and Peter, an old man, a young man, and a small brown pup.

Nobody knew what he was doing in that first minute of finding each other. All that Betty Lee knew was that Aunt Jolly's arms were about her

and that her soft lace smelled of violets. Peter knew that it was difficult to convince Père Léopard that at last they had arrived, and that it was time to get off the train. Both Peter and Betty Lee knew that some sort of introduction had to be made, and they both began telling Aunt Jolly which was Père Léopard and which was Biblio. Swan and Crocus and Diddy Duncum and Dinwiddie were all mixed up in this introduction and talking English. It was a wild moment.

Biblio looked helplessly at Betty Lee, and Père Léopard looked helplessly at Peter. Then everyone laughed. Aunt Jolly did not think language made any difference at a time like this, because everyone knew exactly what was going on. She went up to Père Léopard, shook his hand, and smiled. It was not difficult to see that they were to be real friends. Dinwiddie did the same thing. Like the small Virginia gentleman that he was, he strutted up to Biblio and offered his hand.

They went together to the pony cart. Aunt Jolly and Dinwiddie had brought Betty Lee's old friend, Stonewall Jackson, to meet her. Dinwiddie was holding Biblio's hand, and he called back, "You come, too, Betty Lee, 'cause Stonewall's glad to see you."

She ran to her spotted old pony and gave him a kiss on the bridge of his white nose. Then she climbed into the cart and took Diddy Duncum into her lap. Biblio and Dinwiddie followed her.

In the meantime Aunt Jolly was helping Père Léopard into the Ford. Swan and Crocus helped, too, because, French or not, they both understood that the old man was wabbly on his legs. Peter was saying "Howdy" to all his old friends in the station and helping the baggage master lift the boxes of "little cabbages" onto the platform. Peter was not sorry that traveling with these book boxes had come to an end.

With Père Léopard safely installed in the Ford, Aunt Jolly tripped over to the pony cart and kissed Betty Lee ten or twenty times and managed with smiles and gestures to make Biblio feel that he was welcome.

"Look, Aunt Jolly, this is Peu de Chose." Betty Lee held up the small brown pup.

Hippoleon had had such a delightful moment of wagging not only his tail but all of his huge self. Now this, this small rat-like puppy appeared and spoiled his joy. He had caught sight of Peu de Chose. Squeezed on the seat beside Betty Lee, the great dog turned away his head in disgust.

Aunt Jolly lost her heart to Peu de Chose. "I can't call him that, darling. I'd never be able to call him that. What does it mean, anyway?"

"It means 'a little something.' You can call him 'It-som' for short."

Aunt Jolly kissed the small dog between his ears. Then she looked carefully at the "young man" who was holding Dinwiddie on his lap. "What lovely dark eyes he has," thought Aunt Jolly. "But how pale he is and how very, very thin. We'll have to fatten him, somehow." If Aunt Jolly had seen Biblio as he looked when he left Paris she probably would have cried. As it was, she thought he was starved, and she made up her mind even before they drove away from the station to see that this boy, whatever his name was, Bibby or Bibbles or Bibbity, had more than his share of corn pone and batter cakes and fried chicken.

Aunt Jolly had to stop a minute to explain to two or three of her friends who were waiting in the station to hear about the new guests that it was a boy and an old man from Paris. "That's all that I can tell you now, except that they both looked starved, and that's probably the reason Peter has brought them all this long way. Come around in the morning to meet them." With this

Aunt Jolly took her seat beside Père Léopard in the back of the Ford.

Peter was already between Swan and Crocus in the front seat. Culpepper Jones had said that he would follow along with his rig and bring the bags and all the boxes.

Betty Lee and Biblio laughed all the way to the house, because Diddy Duncum never stopped talking for one minute and it was impossible to explain to him that Biblio did not know what he was saying. Dinwiddie was silent. He was trying to understand why such a nice boy with big brown eyes should talk "so funny."

"Betty Lee," he said the first chance he had between Diddy Duncum's chatter, "what's the matter with this nice boy? He doesn't talk right."

"He speaks French, Dinwiddie. If you come over every day you can learn to speak French," said Betty Lee.

Dinwiddie considered this a few minutes and gazed up into Biblio's face. "Let's teach him to talk right instead, Betty Lee."

As she was translating this remark to Biblio, Stonewall Jackson turned into the driveway of Meadowlarks.

A lump came into Betty Lee's throat. There

had been many such lumps in the last half hour, but this was largest of all. "Biblio," she said softly, "look, Biblio, this is where I live. This is Meadowlarks."

Biblio looked at the great pine tree, her favorite pine tree, and he said, "I think that is a beautiful tree, it's blue, a hundred shades of blue. It's—"

"What's he saying?" interrupted Dinwiddie.

"He's saying that he thinks my tree, our tree, Dinwiddie, is a beautiful tree."

Dinwiddie looked puzzled and said, "I wish he'd talk right."

Then Diddy Duncum put up his small black face to Betty Lee to be kissed. "Sing to me, sing like yo' used to."

There was no time for singing. Stonewall Jackson had stopped in front of the door. As Betty Lee looked at the front doorstep, the old rhyme got her.

For I must see the world, you know,
And bring you back a prize,
A tale of old, a pot of gold,
A prince with great dark eyes.

She looked at Biblio. How like a prince he was! Not a dauphin, of course, but a prince with dark eyes to whom the fairies had given their witchery.

That evening, Biblio's first evening at Meadowlarks, the stars blinked through the mist, and the haze in the valley was like a quiet sea white with moonlight. Lonely owls hooted, elderly frogs croaked, crickets chirped, and lightning bugs flickered in the shadows of the rose garden. Père Léopard, tucked in the softest of soft beds, was beginning to think of the work he would start in the morning when all the *petits choux* were unpacked and stacked in their usual piles. Aunt Jolly, sewing by the open window, was wondering what she could do to take away the worried, tired wrinkle from the brow of this boy whom Peter and Betty Lee had brought home to her. Peter, Biblio, and Betty Lee were sitting on the porch steps. Hippoleon, already making up his mind to be friends with the small puppy, lay close at their feet. Down by the gate the great pine was whispering secrets to the quiet night. Biblio looked at the ribbons of mist in the valley and tried to find words to tell Peter and Betty Lee how he felt. He wanted them to know how beautiful it seemed to him, how like a part of his own Kingdom.

THE END







